



The Advocate of Truth

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THE NUMBER

40

By David Royer

Some people may assume by the title of this article that this is going to be about numerology. Let me address that concern up front. First, Bible numerology, codes or secret meanings behind words or numbers does not exist in Church of God (7th Day) doctrines or teachings. Second, numerology, or a code, is not the method the Lord uses to teach us His instructions on how to live a Christ-led life and obtain individual salvation.

Bible truths come from simple, straightforward, inspired words of Scripture. Timothy says it best: “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:” (II Timothy 3:16). Note this verse says nothing about hidden meanings or fanciful interpretations.

The number 40 is used 146 times in the Bible (KJV) both literally and symbolically. It seems that God has chosen the number 40 to help emphasize times of trial, testing, consecration, reigns, trouble, hardship, chastisement, probation, purification and fulfillment. Historically (outside of Bible texts), 40 would be a memorable number to readers, as 40 weeks is the average length of a human baby gestation. Another historical example, supported by Bible text, is that God calls 40 years a “generation” (Numbers 32:13).

Forty is a large number, but remember, Scriptures do not provide any significant meaning to this number. Below are a few other Bible verses using this number 40:

- The rains (in the epic of Noah’s Ark) fell for 40 days and nights (Genesis 7:4)
- After the Flood waters had receded, Noah

- waited another 40 days to open the window of the Ark (Genesis 8:6)
- Israel ate Manna for 40 years (Exodus 16:35)
- Moses was on Mount Sinai with God for 40 days and nights (Exodus 24:18)
- God allowed the land to rest for 40 years (3 times) (Judges 3:11) (Judges 5:31) (Judges 8:28)
- God gave the nation of Israel to their enemy, the Philistines, for 40 years (Judges 13:1)
- Eli judged Israel for 40 years (I Samuel 4:18)
- Saul, David and Solomon reigned over Israel for 40 years each (Acts 13:21) (II Samuel 5:4) (I Kings 11:42)
- The Temple, built by Solomon, was 40 cubits long (I Kings 6:17)
- 40 baths (measurement of about 230 gallons) was the size of lavers (basins) in the Temple (I Kings 7:38)
- Egypt to be laid desolate for 40 years (Ezekiel 29:11-12)
- In the book of Jonah, God gave Nineveh 40 days to repent (Jonah 3:4)
- Jesus fasted 40 days & nights in the wilderness and was tempted by the devil (Matthew 4:2)
- After his resurrection, Jesus was on the earth 40 days (Acts 1:3)

The various uses of the number 40 is associated with a period of time with spiritual significance to certain memorable events. By comparing Scriptures, numbers and passages, we can always rely on these divinely inspired, written words of God to reveal old truths with the assistance of the Holy Spirit (II Peter 1:21).

At times, there are relationships and *patterns* to numbers. However, we should be careful not to go beyond obvious quantitative values. Seeking meanings that do not exist, is speculative and wrong. Furthermore, mathematicians can find patterns in most large groups of numbers, as found in the Bible. That just confirms the obvious: Our Bible uses a lot of numbers and numbers will have patterns. In closing, remember to follow Scripture, not lead it.



IN SEARCH OF A WIFE FOR ISAAC

For three years after Sarah's death, Abraham lived in mourning. Sorrow weighed heavily upon the patriarch's heart, and the wound of his loss required sufficient time to heal. But in spite of his own grief, Abraham had another family duty to perform. It was time for his son to take a wife.

Isaac was now forty, and the usual time for a man of that day to consider marriage. As was the custom, the father made all decisions concerning a bride. There were certainly enough eligible young women to be found in the lands of the Hittites, Perizzites and Canaanites. But they were not among the sort of people Abraham would wish to incorporate into his family. They were largely idol worshippers, heathens who practiced witchcraft and magic and participated in all sorts of moral depravity. None worshipped the true God, and Abraham did not feel that his son's wife should be chosen from among such pagans.

Summoning his faithful servant Eliezer, Abraham bound him with a vow. Eliezer was to go into the land of Mesopotamia and find a suitable wife for Isaac from among Abraham's kinsmen.

The journey would call for much travel through long stretches of desert. It would also mean imminent danger, for caravan roads were often preyed upon by roving bands of outlaws. Eliezer made excuses. He was not eager to make such a trip. "Even if I find a proper maid, she may not be willing to return with me."

"She must be willing," Abraham replied. "An angel of the Lord will go before you and will direct the maid's steps. Even after the young woman is found though, if she refuses to accompany you I will release you from your vow to me."

Eliezer took ten camels, a number of servants and

enough supplies for many weeks of hard travel. It was a journey of about 400 miles, a vast region between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

Weeks later, tired and hungry, Eliezer arrived near the vicinity of where Nahor, one of Abraham's brothers had made his home. Knowing this to be the time of evening when the townswomen usually drew water from the wells, Eliezer prayed a special prayer. He prayed that the woman who was to become Isaac's wife would not only offer him a drink but would water his camels also. Most of the town girls were too frightened or too haughty to offer a stranger a drink, much less provide for his animals.

Scarcely was the prayer ended when a beautiful maid named Rebekah came to the well. She was the daughter of Bethuel, who was the son of Abraham's brother, Nahor.

Rebekah was beautiful! As she returned from the well with her pitcher, Eliezer asked for a drink of water. "Drink my lord," the girl said without hesitation. Looking at his jaded animals, she added, "I will also provide water for your camels." Imagine Rebekah's amazement when the man, instead of offering a mere word of thanks, placed a gold earring in her ear and adorned her wrist with two gold bracelets.

"Tell me, pretty maid," Eliezer asked, "might I find lodging in the house of your father?"

"We have both straw and provender for your animals and a room for you to lodge in," she assured him. Eliezer followed her down the winding street leading away from the well. Silently he praised God for so quickly directing him to Isaac's future bride.

--From an old Sabbath School Lesson



THOUGHTS ABOUT THE HEART

Bond Tennant

“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life” (Proverbs 4:23).

God’s children must sincerely examine their heart condition to be sure that it conforms to the principles laid out in the Scriptures. The Bible clearly teaches that the attaining of eternal life is possible only through the merit of the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Life is a gift from God. However, this gift is available only to those who believe. Belief must be of the heart. The Apostle Paul wrote, “For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:10).

The word “heart” appears many times in the Bible. In most instances, it is used in a symbolic sense. Many expressions are used in describing the various heart conditions which are possible. The Scriptures speak of such things as heart integrity; a heart that fainteth; a hardened heart; a willing heart; a heart that is discouraged; a grieving heart; and a heart that is filled in various passages of the Old and New Testaments.

The Bible also speaks of: blindness of heart; astonishment of heart; hearts that are melted; glad, merry and rejoicing hearts; hearts of understanding; singing hearts, and sorrowful hearts. Clean hearts, and hearts that are strengthened are also mentioned. There are enlarged hearts, lonely hearts, and burning hearts. Likewise mentioned in Scripture are broken and contrite hearts and singleness of heart.

It has been suggested that the heart is the seat of our affection. This thought is in harmony with the many Bible passages that refer to the heart. A more comprehensive thought is that the heart embodies what we truly are, in

contrast with what we may outwardly appear to be. The child of God will always strive to have his outward demeanor conform to his inward heart sentiments. There will be mistakes of word and deed which do not reflect what he really desires to be because of the imperfections of the flesh. We should be very thankful that the Lord does not judge His people according to what can be seen and heard by man, but that He is able to look upon the “hidden man of the heart”. See I Peter 3:4.

This brings to mind Samuel’s anointing of David to be King of Israel. Samuel made his selection from among the sons of Jesse, choosing his eldest son Eliab. However, the Lord said to Samuel, “...Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart” (I Samuel 16:7).



THE MATHEMATICS OF THE HONEYCOMB

Dandy Designs

Honeybees are master engineers of the storing of dense fluids. Their fluid is honey, and they store it in an amazing way. Worker bees gorge on honey and excrete slivers of wax. Other workers take that wax and position and mold it into columns of six-sided cells. The bees cluster to keep the temperature of the wax at 35 degrees C (95 degrees F) so that it is firm but malleable. Each wax partition is less than .1 mm thick with a tolerance of .002 mm. The cell walls must be at a 120-degree angle in relation to each other to make a lattice of regular hexagons.

There are only three regular polygons which pack together snugly without leaving gaps--equilateral triangles, squares, and regular hexagons. The perimeter of a hexagonal cell that encloses an area is less than that of a square or a triangular cell, making it the most economical shape. Mathematicians have tried other options, such as using curved sides of a mixture of polygons. They have confirmed that curved polygons could not do as well as straight line hexagons. The cells are tilted upward at an angle of 13 degrees from the horizontal. That is exactly the angle needed to stop the honey from dripping out. There is one more problem. How can the bees seal off the bottom of the columns? They construct the bottom with three, four-sided diamond shapes that meet in a point. Two rows of cells are placed back-to-back and offset, so they interlock. With the cells backing each other up, only one layer of wax serves as the bottom of both cells.

It is difficult to believe that structures such as these are accidents or the final product of trial and error. Mistakes are usually lethal or at least result in a loss of vital energy resources. We think the honeybee engineers learned the principles of structural design from their Creator who is the Master Engineer.

--From Does God Exist?

DELIVER ME (Psalm 68-71)

By Pat Evans

*The door to my soul remains open,
And flood waters are coming in;
In the mire, there is no standing,
Lord forgive me, for I have sinned.*

*You know that I am foolish,
And my sins are not hid from Thee;
Draw near to my soul and redeem it,
Through Your grace, Lord, deliver me.*

*Pull me out of the rising water,
Cleanse what I do and think;
Help me live as You have taught us,
Without You, I'll continue to sink.*

*You know my shame and dishonor,
And my enemies are all before Thee;
Blot them out of the book of the living,
Through Your grace, Lord, deliver me.*

*They will perish at Your presence,
As wax melts before a fire;
While You continue to bless the righteous,
Granting grace to whom You desire.*

*Never let me be put to confusion,
Confound those that lay wait for me;
You are my Rock and my Foundation,
Through Your grace, Lord, deliver me.*

*Save me from the hand of the wicked,
From the unrighteous and cruel man;
Even when I'm old and greyheaded,
I will survive by the strength of Your hand.*

*Hear me through Your loving kindness,
Please protect me continually;
You are my hope and my salvation,
Through Your grace, Lord, deliver me.*

Why Two Legs?

(From Daniel 2)

By Moises Torres M.



The image shown in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, represents four world empires in succession of each other and their respective destruction by a stone cut without hand that represents the Lord Jesus Christ. These realms represented in this picture are Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

The fourth Kingdom depicted in this image is the Roman Empire, and is symbolized by two legs, and their respective feet with ten toes.

Why two legs to represent the Roman Empire in this image? History helps us to draw conclusions about this and tells us, that being in the middle of its power and greatness, the Roman emperors were given to the task of living in the midst of excessive luxury, showcasing its might in great festivals and shows which wasted their wealth and power, to the degree that eventually they did not have enough to keep their armies scattered in its extensive borders. It was then when Emperor Theodosius I or Theodosius the Great, decided in 395 A.D., to divide the Empire into two parts, a Western Empire and an Eastern Empire, leaving Rome as the capital of the Western Empire and Byzantium or Constantinople as the capital of the eastern realm, placing his son Arcadius as Emperor over this latter one.

Rome, the Western Empire, could not withstand the

insistent Germans' attacks, disappearing in 476 A.D. On the contrary, the Roman Empire of the East, represented by the left leg of the image, lasted for nearly a thousand years more, until 1453 A.D., when the Ottomans invaded the city of Constantinople, which today is the famous city of Istanbul, Turkey. Rome, the big city and once capital of the whole Empire ceased to be, due to the constant stalking of Germanic tribes, descendants of the Ostrogoths or barbarian peoples and armies.

The Eastern Roman Empire was also known as the Byzantine Empire. Byzantium was a Greek city, capital of Thrace, which was situated at the entrance of the Strait of Bosphorus, on a part of the current city of Istanbul, Turkey. In the Empire of the East, represented by the left leg of the image in Daniel Chapter 2, merged several cultures, predominating the Roman and Greek, hence the origin of the term "Greco-Roman", or Greco-Roman culture. Most of the population spoke the Greek language and Greek classical authors were the basis of Byzantine literature. The Byzantine Empire recognized Christianity as the official religion, although this was developed differently from the West.

In the West (Rome), although the Empire ceased to be as such, it was slowly increasing the power of the Church and the Pope. In Byzantium (East) occurred

otherwise, civilian power was maintained, and the Emperor exercised broad authority over the Church and its highest representative, the Patriarch of Constantinople.

Over time there were differences, increasingly more between the Latin and the Greek Church. Already in the year 381 the Patriarch of Constantinople rejected the doctrine that the Bishop of Rome had authority over the whole Church. Controversies about dogma and rituals were added to disputes over power and jurisdiction. The iconoclasts from the Greek *eikonoklastes*, (destroyers of images) or people who are opposed to the worship of images, denounced the cult to images as the return or return to the pagan worship of idols. In 1054, Pope León IX and Patriarch Michael Cerularius excommunicated each other and the final rupture occurred. The Church of Byzantium or Constantinople seceded from the Pope in Rome, and constituted as the Greek Orthodox Church. This is called in history as the Great Schism. The East Roman Empire reached its splendor in the time of Justinian (527-565).

For more than a thousand years, the Eastern Roman Empire, or Byzantine Empire, had to face many enemies. After achieving victory over the Germanic or barbarian peoples, they had to face the Persians, who were their main opponents for a long time. Then came the Muslim Arabs. The Bulgarians, similar to the Huns-nomads, invaded the Balkans. They also had long clashes with the Mongols and Seljuk Turks, which at the time were undermining the strength and resilience of the Byzantine Empire.

In 1504, the Knights of the Fourth Crusade, rather than go to Jerusalem to defend the city, were against Byzantium and sacked the city, and established a Latin East Empire, since the Greeks prevailed for the most part. The end of the Roman Empire from the East (left leg of the image) came in 1453 when the Ottoman Turks (Muslims) on the orders of sultan Mohamed II finally conquered the legendary city of Byzantium. The last emperor Constantine XI, died facing the enemy.

The survival of the Byzantine Empire, maintained

throughout the medieval period the Christian bastion in the East despite the beliefs of the Persians, Slavs, and Muslims. The activity of Byzantine traders guaranteed to Constantinople an enviable splendour with a fabulous artistic treasure, with temples, paintings, sculptures, and mosaics. It was also the Byzantine Empire that was responsible for the preservation of the Greco-Roman cultural heritage. Thus, the East Roman Empire formed the great bridge between antiquity and the modern age.

The origins of Russia: In the first centuries of the Christian era the Slavic peoples began to organize, who besides the Greco-Romans, the Teutons, and Celts, formed the fourth group of the Indo-European peoples. In the 9th century, the Norman invaders in Eastern Europe made their appearance. According to tradition the Chief Norman Rurik became ruler of the city of Novgorod in 862, and his successor, Oleg in 882 conquered the city of Kiev, Ukraine.

The Normans and the Slavs mingled and eventually the name of Russians was imposed for these unified people. Then the Dukes of Kiev established trade and political relations with Byzantium. In the year 911 the Duke of Kiev signed a first trade treaty with Byzantium, and the Byzantine missionaries began to preach Christianity, and Duke Vladimir came to the Christian faith in 988.

Finally, the Duke Ivan IV (1462-1505) adopted the title of Tsar (Caesar), since as a result of the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks, the Roman imperial throne had been vacant. Moscow, the third Rome, was to complete the Mission of Rome and Byzantium, create a new UNIVERSAL rule, and give a definitive peace to the



Echoes From The Past

Note: The following article appeared in the July 27, 1992 issue of *The Advocate of Truth*. It was written by the then editorial staff.

A STUDY IN THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God” (Philippians 2:5-6).

Holy reverence should characterize the approach of any study of the life of Jesus Christ of whom it was said: **“Never man spake like this Man.”** and of whom it could be said, **“Never man was born like this Man.”** and **“Never man lived like this Man,”** **“Never man performed like this Man,”** **“Never man died like this Man,”** and **“Never man arose from the grave,”** and **“Never man ascended into heaven like this Man.”**

Jesus Christ was and is in every sense of the word a Man that came to earth and assumed the flesh of mankind. Equally true is the statement that Jesus Christ existed before His humanity. He was flesh and blood during His sojourn on earth, and is today the Son of God, sitting by the Father in Heaven. What quality or attribute of humanity can you name which Jesus did not have, saying only sin? What quality, attribute or power of Deity can you name which Jesus did not possess?

Leaving His heavenly glory and becoming human is a problem with some people. They do not believe that Jesus existed before He was born of Mary. It is no problem to the saints of God full of faith that what the Bible says we will believe. So why should some among you stumble? Science, reason, and human perception fail, but **FAITH** shines forth and makes the way by glorious revelation. Peace follows in its wake, and love and hope burst in full fruition.

Let us take the holy writings and let them present the truth of this marvelous Jesus. Let the Word speak for

itself, or rather for Him who is subject and object, and let **FAITH** guided by the Spirit of God, the Author of the Book interpret. Let us read Hebrews 1:1-3, 10. We read here that Jesus laid the foundations of the earth, made the worlds, the heavens are the work of His hands and He upholds all things by the word of His power with His Father. Compare these statements with Colossians 1:16, 17 and John 1:3. The devout Believer will see a marvelous picture of how close the heavenly Father and His Son Jesus actually are. **“They are one in agreement.”** Now remember the words of Jesus: **“Before Abraham was I AM.”** Jesus discloses a wonderful truth here that He existed before Abraham existed.

In John 8:56, Jesus affirms again: **“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.”** Jesus here again tells us that He spoke to the patriarch Abraham in the field of Mamre (Genesis 18).

Let us examine the Scripture more closely. Isaiah 7:14 says: **“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”** This statement is repeated by the angel Gabriel when he announced that Mary would conceive and bear a son (Matthew 1:18-21; Luke 1:30-35). As we read Jesus’ own words, we are still more impressed that Jesus came from His first estate in heaven to put on flesh of men to save them from their sins. **“For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”** **“And now, O Father,**

glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” (John 6:38-40 and 17:5).

I am profoundly overawed at the many Scriptures that tell us of the pre-existence of Jesus. **“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting”** (Micah 5:2). Also read John 1:1 and 8:58.

The kenosis of Jesus is wonderfully described in the whole second chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians. Especially the seventh verse is so stimulating to this subject: **“But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men”**. It is most distressing to note the apparently large number of ministers in all denominations who either doubt or deny this basic truth. To the intelligent child of God, it is plainly evident that Deity demands a virgin birth, and if there was no virgin birth, there was no Deity.

Divine wisdom has not told us everything about Jesus. The Son of God came into the world but from babyhood to manhood the veil is drawn away but once in order to show that Jesus was really the Son of God. A most beautiful picture described for us concerning Jesus as a boy was amidst the wise men of Jerusalem in the temple. The meager information vouchsafed us is found in the statement: **“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man”** (Luke 2:52). The evident meaning of this verse is that the mental and physical development was similar to that of any normal child. His subjection to Joseph and Mary and His works of thirty years seclusion at Nazareth were plainly self-emptying to which allusion has already been made.

A few questions might here arise concerning the limitations of His humanity. Was there ever a time when Jesus did not know that He was the Son of God? Did His spiritual capacity and power of God grow on Him gradually? When was it that Jesus fully realized His Messiahship? All these questions are readily and satisfactorily answered if one keeps in mind that sixth chapter of John in which it is stated twelve times by Jesus: **“That he came down from heaven”** or that the **“Father sent him.”** In I Timothy 3:16, it says: **“...Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the**

flesh...” Jesus also knew that He **“...must be about my Father’s business”** (Luke 2:49).

These phenomena are part of His miraculous coming, and let us not speculate where God has been silent. It would seem that the spiritual and Scriptural reasoner would find little difficulty here. Only this may be added to round out the thought, that only four people beside Jesus Himself knew that He came from God and was the Son of God: Namely Mary and Joseph, Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth. Of these four, in all probability, only Mary kept pondering things in her heart. Full comprehension of the Son of God came after His baptism and the beginning of His public ministry.

As soon as the day of Jesus’ manifestation came, all secrecy and seclusion were over. The Son of God was recognized by His Father in heaven when He came out of the Jordan River, and His Father said: **“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”** Now it came to pass that **“He spake as never a man spake.”** No human being ever approached His teachings, His parables, His wisdom. No other human being ever approached His pure and perfect life so that He could hurl in the teeth of His enemies this question: **“Which of you convinceth me of sin?”** No human being ever approached Him in the performance of signs and wonders. From blessing the children to the raising of the dead, His works are a fascinating study. No human being ever died like this man for He said: **“No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again...”** (John 10:18). Men die because they were born, but Jesus was born in order that He might die. In prophecy, in type, in parable, and in plain teaching, the substitutionary efficacy of the death of Jesus is clearly expounded throughout the Word of God.





Are You a True Believer?

By David DeLong

Many people claim to be believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. As such, they claim that Jesus is their Lord and Savior and that He will receive them to glory when He returns to earth again. But, are they true believers? You see, even Satan and his demons are believers in God. We are told in James 2:19: "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." What, then, differentiates a true believer from a false believer?

Works!!! Satan and his demons believe that there is one God, but they do not display works to go along with that belief. The Apostle James tells us plainly what true faith is. In James 1:22-25 we find: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

Furthermore, James explains about true faith in chapter 2:14-20: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and

tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?"

We are not addressing works for earning salvation. No person can earn salvation by doing good works. Ephesians 2:8-9 makes this abundantly clear. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." The works we are addressing is that which backs up a person's faith to make it real faith. No one can be saved without this type of real faith. James makes this point about having real faith by giving the examples of Abraham and Rahab in James 2:21-26. Abraham backed up his faith in the Lord by being willing to offer up his son as a sacrifice. And Rahab showed her faith in the Lord by receiving the messengers that came to her from the Israelites, and sent them out another way.

There are many types of faith works that a true believer can perform, but the most important ones are the obedience works we find expressed in the Bible. As a matter of fact a true believer, or saint, is defined by obedience works. Revelation 14:12 reads: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." What are the commandments of God? The main set of God's commandments are the Ten Commandments as listed in Exodus 20:3-17 and Deuteronomy 5:7-21. However, there are other commandments that God has given to us.

There is the commandment to observe the law of the clean and unclean meats. This commandment is found in Leviticus, chapter 11:1-30 and Deuteronomy, chapter 14:3-21. To prove that this commandment is still in force today and not merely one of the laws of Moses that have

passed away, we go to the book of Isaiah, chapter 66. Verses 15-17, which refers to a time yet in the future, informs us: "For, behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many. They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD." We can clearly see that in pleading with "all flesh" (all of mankind) the Lord will severely punish those who are still eating unclean meats when He comes to earth.

There is also a commandment for a person to pay ten percent of his or her income to the Lord, known as tithing. We read in Malachi 3:10-11: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if

I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts." Jesus endorsed tithing. In Matthew 23:23 we find Him addressing the scribes and Pharisees of His day. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

There are other commandments of God laid out for us in the Scriptures. We need to be diligent in reading His Word to find them and to be obedient to them. Faith works are a must for a person to inherit salvation. May the Lord help us in performing them according to His will.



The Weightier Matters of the Law

By David DeLong

Jesus made it plain in the Scriptures that there are weightier and lesser matters of the Law. We are not comparing the Ten Commandment Law with the law of Moses which has been done away. Within God's moral law code, which includes the Ten Commandments, there are some commandments which contain more weight than others. For instance, in Matthew 23:23, where Jesus is addressing some scribes and Pharisees, He makes this statement: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." We see here that matters of judgment, mercy, and faith are considered weightier matters of the law. That leaves tithing, then, as a lesser matter of the law. So, can we slack on not doing the lesser matters of the law? Jesus answers that question with a forceful **NO!** He

said, "these (the weightier matters of the law) ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other (tithing) undone."

Going to another passage of Scripture in Matthew, Jesus taught about lesser and greater commandments. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:17-19). The first four commandments of the Ten Commandments deal with our relationship with God and, therefore, are weightier commandments than the last six, which deal with our relationship to people. Although keeping the seventh day Sabbath holy

is a weightier commandment than not stealing, God expects a person to keep both and, ultimately, all ten commandments.

In Romans 5:12-14 we find a passage of Scripture that many people misunderstand. This passage reads: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come." Many people believe that the Ten Commandments were not given by God until Mount Sinai. This is not true, however. Sin, by definition, is read thus: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). The Ten Commandments were not written down, in codified form, until God gave them to Moses on Mount Sinai. But, even though they were not written down on two tables of stone from Adam until Moses, they still defined sin during that time, "and death by sin".

The commandments of God are to result in love and

faith as we see from I Timothy 1:5: "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned". Jesus taught that the two greatest commandments are to be based upon love. "Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matthew 22:35-40).

Finally, the Apostle Paul wrote: "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:8-10).

Love Not The Things Of The World

By David DeLong

The Word of God, the Bible,
Its pages to us are unfurled;
A message to us it plainly reads:
Love not the things of the world.

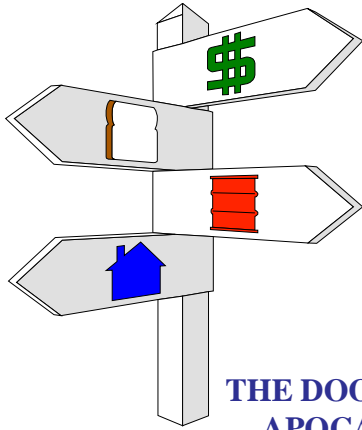
The wicked Serpent of this age,
With venom is coiled and curled;
He's ready to strike the covetous,
So love not the things of the world.

The Lord will pour out seven plagues,
Which upon the earth will be hurled;
They'll fall upon all people
Who love the things of the world.

But all the righteous saints of God
Will enter the gates that are pearled;
And live within God's city,
Who love not the things of the world.

The wicked world of Noah's day
Perished, when waters swirled;
Today's world will be burnt with fire,
So love not the things of the world.





THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

If you have any items of interest that you would like to submit to this segment, please send them to The Church of God Publishing House, PO Box 328, Salem, WV 26426-0328.

THE DOOMSDAY CLOCK: APOCALYPSE SOON?

A brief mention of the Doomsday Clock appeared in this column in the past. I was searching on the internet, and I saw some articles about the Doomsday Clock. The following are some facts about the hands of the clock being moved up to two minutes before midnight:

Growing concerns about a possible nuclear war and other global threats have pushed forward the symbolic Doomsday Clock by 30 seconds – to just two minutes before midnight.

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist (BSA) said it had acted because the world was becoming “more dangerous”.

The clock, created by the journal in 1947, is a metaphor for how close mankind is to destroying the Earth. It is now closest to the apocalypse it has been since 1953.

That was the year when the US and the Soviet Union tested the hydrogen bombs.

Last year, the clock was also moved forward by 30 seconds.

What was behind the decision?

Announcing the move in Washington DC on Thursday, the BAS said the decision “wasn’t easy” and said it was not based on a single factor.

However, BSA President and CEO Rachel Bronson said that “in the year’s discussions, nuclear issues took center stage again”.

The team of scientists singled out a series of nuclear tests by North Korea. They dramatically escalated tensions on the Korean peninsula and led to a war of words between North Korea and the US.

The BAS also referred to a new US nuclear strategy that was expected to call for more funding to expand the role of the country’s nuclear arsenal.

Rising tension between Russia and the West also was

a contributing factor.

“The weakening of institutions” around the world in dealing with major global threats – including climate change – was another major concern, the scientists said.

They also mentioned US President Donald Trump’s “unpredictability”, pointing to his often controversial tweets and statements.

*Trump’s year on Twitter – Who has he criticized and praised the most?

The minute hand on the Doomsday Clock is a metaphor for how vulnerable to catastrophe the world is deemed to be.

The symbolic device was created by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists in 1947. It was founded at the University of Chicago in 1945 by a group of scientists who helped develop the first atomic weapons.

Today, the group includes physicists and environmental scientists from around the world who decide whether to adjust the clock in consultation with the group’s Board of Sponsors – which includes Nobel laureates.

How does the threat compare to previous years?

When it was created in 1947, the clock’s hand stood at seven minutes to midnight. Since then it has changed more than 20 times, ranging from two minutes to midnight to 17 minutes before midnight in 1991.

But during the Cuban Missile Crisis – considered by many analysts to be the closest the Cold War faceoff between the US and the USSR came to escalating into a nuclear war – the Doomsday Clock stood still at seven minutes to midnight.

The BAS says: “The answers to this seeming anomaly are that the Doomsday Clock captures trends and takes into account the capacity of leaders and societies to respond to crises with reasoned actions to prevent nuclear holocaust.

“The Cuban Missile Crisis, for all its potential and ultimate destruction, only lasted a few weeks; however, the lessons were quickly apparent when the United States and the Soviet Union installed the first hotline between the two capitals to improve communications, and, of course negotiated the 1963 test ban treaty, ending all atmospheric nuclear testing.”

In fact, the Doomsday Clock was moved back to 12 minutes to midnight in 1963. **--BBC NEWS**

Comment

From studying God’s Word, we see that the Doomsday Clock exercise really is a project in futility. Outside of those who understand and believe the plan that God has for man, all others will make theories regarding the time of annihilation or catastrophe regarding the world, and they will fear the things that occur. Jesus said, “Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken” (Luke 21:26). Only God knows the time these things will occur. These things are very perilous (dangerous) (II Timothy 3:1), but man will not be completely destroyed. “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened” (Matthew 24:21-22).

FALSE MISSILE ALERT

Continuing the subject of the Doomsday Clock, you no doubt have heard about the false emergency missile alert that affected Hawaii. The following is an article which appeared in the Houston Chronicle:

Emergency missile alert sent In error during test in Hawaii

For up to 40 minutes, Hawaii residents scrambled to send messages to loved ones, seeking shelter and prepare for an incoming ballistic missile after an emergency alert was sent in error. A Hawaii Emergency Management Agency employee initiated an internal test but chose an incorrect option from the program.

The false alarm put in focus the possibility of a missile attack on Hawaii as tensions between the US and North Korea continue to rise.

The agency is conducting an investigation and suspended internal tests until it is completed.

--From online and wire reports.

Comment

I saw a video taken during the alert. It was sad to see everyone scrambling for cover. Some were even crawling into manholes with their children. It was reported that one young man shouted “Mom, are we going to die?”

There was also a false missile alert in Japan. However, it was announced that it was a mistake earlier than 40 minutes.

UNITED STATES WEALTH

I read that the U.S. wealth is up at this time, but it still trails the ’07 peak.

Comment

The year 2007 was just before the Great Recession began. It takes time to completely recover from a downturn. Perhaps the same level of recovery will not be seen again. There could be another recession knocking at the front door!

IV SHORTAGE

I heard from a reliable source that in some parts of the country there is a shortage of IV’s for treating the flu. Experts say that this is a strong flu season.

U.S. MILITARY

The U. S. military priorities are changing. Let me share the first paragraph of an article taken from the **Houston Chronicle**:

WASHINGTON – The United States is switching its priority to countering Chinese and Russian military might after almost two decades of focusing on the fight against terrorism, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Friday, unveiling a national defense strategy that Pentagon officials say will provide a blueprint for years to come.

Comment

It sounds as though the old Cold War has returned. There is much evil in the world, and it is more than the military can handle!

THE AFGHAN WAR

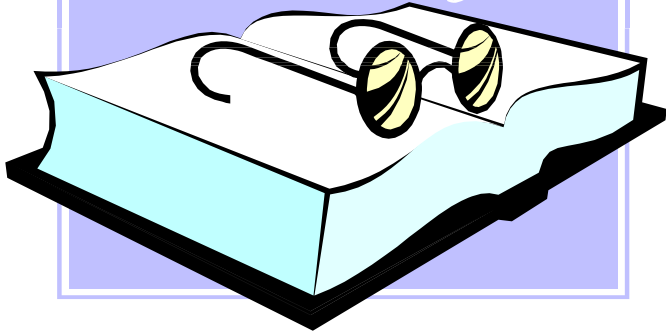
A news report said that Taliban fighters with high-tech gear kill Afghanistan forces.

Comment

The United States military has been in Afghanistan for many years, and nothing has been really accomplished. The many terror groups are still fighting the United States Military, and they will continue to fight the United States military as long as they are there. There is no gain in staying there.

BIBLE

Study



Questions and Answers

Question: What are some facts that prove that the Bible is God's inspired Word?

Answer: Let us give you four reasons:

The Bible is God's Word because it sets forth the highest standards of conduct. Righteousness is commanded and sin is condemned. The first thing God commanded of Adam was a law. "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:16-17). "For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people. Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein; I am the LORD your God" (Leviticus 18:29-30).

Inner purity is required. "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

The unity of the Bible shows it to be inspired. There is, first of all, unity in structure. Think how the Bible is divided, 39 books in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament. Then note how each Testament is divided into different lengths and by different men. The

main theme of the Bible is love. Out of love the world was created. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before HIM IN LOVE" (Ephesians 1:4). We know the verse in John 3:16, but few realize that Jesus commanded love the same as God commanded His love to us. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Jesus said: "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

There is unity of prophecy in the Scriptures. The King and the kingdom are at the center of the Old Testament prophecy, and the New Testament is the answer and the fulfillment of these prophecies. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (I Corinthians 10:11). "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Hebrews 12:28).

Finally, on the subject of unity, we find unity of teaching. No contradictions have been found in the Bible. Have you thought that you found one? Here is an illustration. The verse 3 of Revelation 15 calls Jesus "King of saints" in the KJV. All other versions call Jesus other things, but not King of saints. Some are "King of the ages," "King of the nations," "King of eternity," "Eternal King," "King of the world," etc. WHY? The theologians say that if they left it "king of saints," they would cause the Bible to

contradict itself because in Revelation 19 Jesus is called “King of kings.” But we know that “King of saints” is the proper way to render this verse for Jesus comes in two stages. The theologians never noticed that.

The Bible is trustworthy and shows itself to be inspired when it touches upon history. Evidence has been found in the area of Babylon by archaeologists which points out that a man named Abraham did live and engaged in business activities. Egypt has given up to the archaeologists certain finds which have opened up the store of literature and fixed the rulers of the exodus. We have also seen artifacts from the time of the tower of Babel up to the time of the birth of Jesus. Also tablets have been found which tell of the times during which the Hebrew people were in Egypt and their tasks were made difficult.

Other archaeological finds have revealed the oldest Aramaic language and writing and have opened up the whole Mesopotamian valley with knowledge which confirm the Bible. Every place where biblical history is touched is confirmed.

The Bible is confirmed because of its scientific accuracy. Science has found that energy can be changed into matter. The saints knew that Jesus was already risen from the tomb before the angel rolled the stone away. The angel said, “Jesus is not here for He is risen.” Jesus changed from matter to energy. He did the same thing in John 20:19: “Then the same day at evening (Saturday night) . . . when the doors were shut . . . came Jesus and stood in the midst, . . .” This will happen to all the saints that belong to the family of God. They will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air (John 3:8 and I Thessalonians 4:16-17). The scientific truth is stated in non-scientific language. God created with His power the elements we have to give us the proper way of life.

Isaiah spoke of the world as round (40:22). The dimensions of Noah’s Ark is a ship that will not capsize (Genesis 6:15). The specifics of the waters in one bed (Genesis 1:9-10). Men who have studied the oceans and their currents find this to be very true.

Science has learned how to make ice by the process of evaporation from the Bible. We read: “And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on

their right hand, and on their left” (Exodus 14:21-22). Now the wind brought about by God blew all night across the Red Sea, and this process of evaporation caused the water to freeze, and the children of Israel were able to walk across the water dry. This is proven in the song sung by Moses in the next chapter: “And with the blast of thy nostrils (the wind) the waters were gathered together, the floods (water) stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed (frozen) in the heart of the sea” (Exodus 15:8). This certainly proves that the Bible is inspired because of its scientific accuracy. What a wonderful Word of God we have and can totally rely on it. **“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me”** (John 5:39).

Question: Will you please describe the two arks in the Old Testament. Just how do they differ.

Answer: The English word ark, a wooden chest or container, is used in the King James Version to stand for two different Hebrew words in the Old Testament. This has led to some confusion between Noah’s ark and the ark of the covenant.

In the story of Noah, the ark was, of course, a kind of boat, the giant craft he built to escape the Flood (Genesis 6-8). Also Moses floated to safety in an ark. It was an ark of bulrushes made by his mother to protect her newborn son from a pharaoh’s cruel edict (Exodus 2:1-6).

The ark of the covenant, though sometimes pictured in illustrations as a miniature boat, was a portable chest made to be carried on poles, not to float. The Hebrew word for this ark is totally unrelated to the term used to designate the ark of Noah.

Question: I know that the proverb, “God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb”, is not found in the Bible. From where does it originate?

Answer: “God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb” is from *A Sentimental Journey* by the English Author Laurence Sterne (1713—68). Sterne did not originate the proverb but translated it from the French.

Question: Were all four of the Gospel writers among the original twelve apostles?

Answer: Only Matthew and John were among the original twelve apostles.



Myanmar

Preaching being performed in a church in Myanmar.





Teachers with their youth group assembled together.



Specials being given by members of the Church in Myanmar.

LESSON I

JACOB IN EGYPT

Scripture Reading: Genesis 46:28-34; 47:1-12.

Golden Text: Genesis 47:7.

“And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.”

1. What land did Joseph’s family go to? Genesis 46:28.
2. Did Joseph go to meet his family? What did his father do when he saw him? Genesis 46:29.
3. Joseph took his father and five of his brothers to Pharaoh. What question did Pharaoh ask them, and what was their answer? Genesis 47:3-4.
4. What did Pharaoh tell Joseph to do with his brethren? Genesis 47:5-6.
5. Jacob blessed Pharaoh and then Joseph took his family into the best land of Egypt. What were the names of this city and country? Genesis 47:10-11, 27.
6. Did Joseph continue to see that this family had bread? Genesis 47:12.
7. How long did Jacob live in Egypt, and how old was he? Genesis 47:28.
8. When Jacob became old and sick, what request did he have for Joseph? Genesis 47:29-30.

LESSON II

THE LAST DAYS OF JACOB

Scripture Reading: Genesis 49:28-33; 50:3,11,15,19-26.

Golden Text: Hebrews 11:22.

“By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment

concerning his bones.”

NOTE: Jacob has called his sons together so that he could tell them what would befall them in the last days and to bless them. Genesis 49:1-2.

1. After Jacob (Israel) blesses his sons, what did he instruct them to do? Genesis 49:29-30,33.
2. How many days did the Egyptians mourn over the death of Jacob? Genesis 50:3.

NOTE: A score is twenty years.

3. When Joseph and his brethren returned Jacob to the land of his father, what did the inhabitants say? Genesis 50:11.
4. After Jacob was buried, what did Joseph’s brothers say about Joseph? Genesis 50:15.
5. How did Joseph treat his brothers after his father died? Genesis 50:19-21.
6. How long did Joseph live in Egypt? Genesis 50:22.
7. What were Joseph’s last words to his family? Genesis 50:24-26.

LESSON III

ISRAEL IN EGYPT

Scripture Reading: Exodus 1:7-22.

Golden Text: Exodus 1:7.

“And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.”

1. What happened to the children of Israel who lived in Egypt after Joseph died? Exodus 1:6-7.
2. How did the new Egyptian Pharaoh feel about the children of Israel? Exodus 1:8-10.

- 3. What did the Egyptians first do with the children of Israel? Exodus 1:11.
- 4. Why did the Egyptians still continue to grieve? Exodus 1:12.
- 5. How were the children of Israel treated by the Egyptians? Exodus 1:13-14.
- 6. What did the evil Egyptian king next command? Exodus 1:15-16.
- 7. Did the midwives do as the king commanded? Why? Exodus 1:17-21.
- 8. What did Pharaoh still command his people to do? Exodus 1:22.

- 6. Did Moses become the son of Pharaoh's daughter? Why did she call him Moses? Exodus 2:10.
- 7. Moses' true parents had faith that God would save their baby. Hebrews 11:23.

LEAP FROG

Begin at start and go around the circle, leaping over two letters at a time. Go around the circle three times, and end at finish. Write the Bible verse on the lines provided. If you need help, see Ephesians 4:26.

“ _____ ,
 _____ :

 _____ ”

LESSON IV

THE BIRTH OF MOSES

Scripture Reading: Exodus 2:1-10.

Golden Text: Exodus 2:10 (last part).

“And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.”

NOTE: We learned in our last lesson that Pharaoh ordered all boy babies be put to death. We will now learn about Moses and how he is saved.

- 1. When Moses was born, what did his mother do to save him? Exodus 2:2-4.
- 2. Who found baby Moses in the river? Exodus 2:5
- 3. What did the sister of the baby say to Pharaoh's daughter? Exodus 2:7.
- 4. Whom did she call to nurse the baby? Exodus 2:9.
- 5. Did the mother take the child and nurse it? Exodus 2:9.





FIRST DAY OF VACATION

It was the first day of vacation. Bert thought about it all during breakfast.

"No school today," he said to himself. "All day long to have fun."

After breakfast, Bert got his bicycle from the garage. He tinkered with it for a while. At last, he was satisfied with the way it worked.

"Mom," he called, "I'm going over to Terry's, is that all right?"

Mother agreed, and Bert rode happily down the street to play with Terry.

Terry was in the back yard. "Hi!" he called as Bert rode around the house. "You're just in time to help me work on my rabbit pens."

"Not me" said Bert. "This is vacation. I'm going to loaf and have fun all day." He watched Terry for a while. Terry wasn't much of a carpenter. Bert reached for the hammer. "Here, let me nail it for you. You're getting it all crooked."

Terry gave a sigh of relief. "I've got ten thumbs when it comes to building things."

"I can show you some tricks that Dad taught me," Bert suggested. "It's mostly in knowing how."

Before long the rabbit pen was nicely repaired. "You did a good job," Terry said.

"Aw, that's nothing," Bert replied. "I like to build things." he looked up at the sun. "I think I've got time to

play some more before lunch. Let's go over to Bill's place."

Terry got his bike. They rode along together. "Vacation time is swell, isn't it?" Terry commented.

"yes," Bert agreed. "I'm not going to do a thing but loaf and have fun this whole vacation." Just then he saw Bill busily pushing the lawn mower. "Hey, Bill! What are you pushing that thing for? Don't you know it's vacation?"

Bill mopped his face with his arm. "Vacation's a good time to get things done," said Bill. "Now Dad won't have to do it after he comes home from the office at night. I can help with things like this."

"But vacation is for fun," argued Bert.

"Helping Dad so he has time to play with me is fun," said Bill. He gave the mower a big push. "When I get through, Mom is taking me swimming at the lake."

"If we helped, would she take us, too?" Bert asked.

Bill grinned. "I thought that would get you. The rake is over there."

Terry beat Bert to the rake. "You get the lawn car," he said. "I'll rake up the grass cuttings."

"Somebody has to trim the edges," reminded Bill.

With three boys working, it did not take long to finish mowing and raking the lawn.

"What time is it?" Bert asked.

"It isn't anywhere near lunchtime," said Terry. "If that's what you're worrying about. Let's see if we can go swimming with Bill," said Terry.

"Hurry," Bill called after them. "The sooner we get started, the longer we can stay."

Soon the boys were back with their bathing trunks. "Now for the lake," said Bert. "That's fun, and lots of it."

When they reached the lake, the boys were disappointed to find a sign saying, "BEACH CLOSED--NO SWIMMING."

"That's strange," said Bill. "The beach was open yesterday. I wonder what's the matter."

"Let's go see," said Terry.

The three boys walked down to the beach. They could see the owner busily raking the top few inches of the sand into huge piles.

"Oh, hello boys," he greeted them. "No swimming today. Didn't you see my sign?"

"What are you doing?" Bert asked.

“Some mischievous boys broke bottles all over the sand last night, so that it is dangerous to walk on. Before I can open the beach, I have to scrape up all this and that might have pieces of glass in it.”

“Do you have many more tools?” Bert asked.

The owner pointed to a shed near the edge of the beach. “There are some of these big hoes in there. They work fine. But are you sure you want to help? It’s hard work, you know.”

The boys ran to get the hoes. “We want to swim,” Bert called back.

With the boys helping, it didn’t take long to clear the beach of the broken glass. The boys had a fine swim after their hard work. The water was refreshing.

By the time they were through with their swim, it was lunchtime. Bill’s mother took the boys home.

“Did you have a good time this morning?” Bert’s mother asked him.

Bert slid into his chair at the table. He nodded “I was certainly busy. I helped Terry fix his rabbit pens. Then Terry and I helped Bill mow and rake his lawn. After that, all three of us helped Mr. George clean up the beach.”

“I’ll say you were busy,” Bert’s brother exclaimed. “I thought you weren’t going to do anything but have fun during vacation.”

“I’m not,” said Bert. But his eyes widened with surprise as he did some thinking. “You know something?” he said. “I worked most of the morning. But it was fun. I guess it isn’t so much the work but the way you go at it that counts. All play and no work wouldn’t be much fun after all.”



JUMBLED BIBLE J’S

Here are the names of ten Bible characters, each beginning with the letter “J.”

How quickly can you rearrange the jumbled letter and discover its identity?

1. Mehejair _____
2. Boardman _____
3. Suhoja _____
4. Zeleebj _____
5. Najon _____
6. Hjnnotana _____
7. Hojna _____
8. Shopej _____
9. Siojha _____
10. Ejses _____

WORD SEARCH

Circle the hidden names

**A A S A U L S T
H B O A Z E E P
A E R U T H T L
Z L S A R A H E
L E A H H A M U
A D A M R A I M
I S A A C E M A
H S T E V E R S**

Abraham, Ham, Sarah, Ahaz, Boaz, Abel, Saul, Leah, Seth, Isaac, Eve, Adam, Samuel

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DEAR VOLUNTEER

*You say you are no one special,
That anyone could do what you do;
When you are one in a million,
And we are all grateful to you.*

*Maybe you wrote a note
For someone to send to a friend;
Who, like us is helpless and old,
Or was sick and is still on the mend.*

*Or maybe someone you took for a walk,
Pushing them along in their chair;
Or maybe you sewed on a button,
Or combed back somebody's hair.*

*Or maybe you sat and listened
About someone's life in the past;
And you made them feel you were interested,
And the warmth of your interest will last.*

*So, you see, you are quite special,
And have earned your reward, and more;
When God hands you a pair of slightly used wings,
And says, "You've been an angel before".*

(The Grateful Residents of Heartland)

--Betty Whetstone

