

Sunday, August 7, 2022

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 1:1, 10-20

The Bible is God's chart to steer by, to keep one from the bottom of the sea, to show where the harbor is and how to reach it without running aground.

—Henry Ward Beecher

If you were asked to describe the Bible, what would you say? You could start with the obvious and say it is like a book — a big book of little books inside. Perhaps, you could call it God's *autobiography*. However, hymnwriter William How (1823-1897), Irish and Anglican vicar, thought the Bible was “a golden *casket* where gems of truth are stored” (emphasis added). Perhaps it is a *key* that unlocks timeless truths. Or it is a *road map* or *GPS signal* that guides us safely to our eternal home. Or, it's a huge *text message* or *email* from God to the human race.

The Bible itself, however, describes itself as a *sword*: “The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword” (Hebrews 4:12; see also Ephesians 6:17). In Psalm 119:105, we read, “Your word is a *lamp* to my feet and a *light* to my path” (emphasis added). Jesus described it as *bread*, when he said to the devil, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God’” (Matthew 4:4). Finally, the apostle Peter thought of the Bible as *milk*, saying “Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation” (1 Peter 2:2).

I like how the following poem, attributed to John Clifford, imagines the word of God. The poem is called “The Anvil of God's Word.”

*Last eve I paused beside the blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
Then looking in, I saw upon the floor,
Old hammers, worn with beating years of time.*

*“‘How many anvils have you had,’ said I,
‘To wear and batter all these hammers so?’
‘Just one,’ said he, and then with twinkling eye,
‘The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.’*

*“And so, I thought, the Anvil of God's Word
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The Anvil is unharmed, the hammers gone.”*

Yes, just like this ancient anvil, God's word will endure forever.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: O God, thank you for the Book above all books that has given me guidance for so many years! Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: James 1-2

Monday: Jeremiah 9-12

Tuesday: Jeremiah 13-16

Wednesday: Jeremiah 17-20

Thursday: Jeremiah 21-23

Friday: Jeremiah 24-26

Saturday: Psalms 85-87

VERSE TO REMEMBER

If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. —James 1:5

Things in Common

What is one thing shared by all three items in the same group?

A: a cow, a shoe, a baby

B: a doctor's office, a post office, music

C: a zipper, a shark, a comb

D: restaurant goer, a bird, the Senate

E: a potato, a hurricane, a target

F: a river, a person, a cave

Yea or Nay?

Read the following question and then answer with either a "yes" or a "no."

If the day before the day after the day before today was hotter than the day after the day before today, was the day before today hotter than today?

RIDDLE

1

You throw away the outside and cook the inside. Then you eat the outside and throw away the inside. What did you eat?

RIDDLE

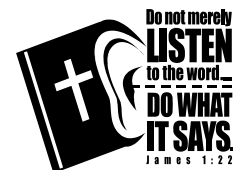
2

What is the only way a leopard will change his spots?

Answers: *Things in Common*—A. a tongue; B. a scale (or a key); C. teeth; D. a bill; E. an eye; F. a mouth. *Yea or Nay?*—Yes. The day before the day after the day before today was yesterday. The day after the day before today is today. And the day before today was yesterday. That is why yesterday was hotter than today. *Riddle 1*—An ear of corn or a chicken. *Riddle 2*—By going from one spot to another. *THE SAME AS*—1. Pressure; 2. Effectiveness; 3. Lively; 4. Disaster; 5. Humanistic; 6. Expedite; 7. Undefinable; 8. Agreement; 9. Obedient; 10. Insistent.

THE SAME AS ... Can you identify the word that has a similar meaning (synonym)?

1. COERCE: reduce, mislead, improve, pressure.
2. EFFICACY: effectiveness, effortlessly, emergency, morality.
3. EBULLIENT: daring, violent, lively, ready.
4. CATAclysm: wonder, disaster, miracle, session.
5. ALTRUISTIC: greedy, humanistic, selfish, inconsiderate.
6. FACILITATE: worsen, hurt, block, expedite.
7. ENIGMA: undefinable, appease, clarify, enlighten
8. CONSENSUS: agreement, denial, refusal, opposition.
9. DOCILE: observant, obedient, headstrong, resistant.
10. EMPHATIC: weak, insistent, remorseful, trite.



Sunday, August 14, 2022

Scripture Reading: Hebrews 11:29–12:2

Find out how much God has given you and from it take what you need; the remainder is needed by others. —Saint Augustine

Once upon a time, there was a young orphan girl who was feeling abandoned and alone. She was out walking in a meadow one day when she looked up and saw a small butterfly trapped in a thorn bush. Freeing the butterfly from its captivity, she was astounded to see it transform into a magical fairy.

“For your kindness,” said the good fairy, “I will grant you any wish you would like.”

Without hesitation, the girl replied, “I want to be happy!”

“So be it,” said the fairy, and vanished.

As the little girl grew up, she realized there was no one else in the land as happy as she. Others marveled at her contagious sense of joy. When people asked her where that joy came from — what was her secret? — she would only smile and reply, “The secret of my happiness is that I listened to a good fairy when I was a little girl.”

As she grew older, the parade of visitors only increased. Everyone was afraid that, when she died, the secret to true happiness could die with her. “Tell us, please,” her neighbors begged. “Tell us what the good fairy said.”

“It’s very simple, really,” said the young-woman-now-grown-old. “The fairy told me that all people, without regard to education, no matter their age, rich or poor, had need of me.”

Think about this for a few moments. Do you think it is a universal truth, or one that might apply only to certain individuals? Does it apply to you? *Are you happiest when you are needed?*

Perhaps you do not feel needed, and it makes you sad. But think about what people need, and you might realize that you are needed more than you thought.

A frustrated woman in a counseling session explained to the therapist what she wanted from her husband: “All I want is not much more than my dog wants from him. When my husband comes home, our dog barks and runs to him, tail a-wagging, waiting for three things to happen: first, a kind look; second, a friendly word; and third, a loving touch. A look, a word, a touch; that’s all I really want in this relationship.”

That’s all most people need and want. And you can offer it, every day! Notice people. Speak to people. And in these days of Covid-19, instead of a touch or hug, give someone a fist bump! They will love you for it!

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Lord, you need me, and I need you. Now I realize that others need me as well. Help me to sense their need and respond to it. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings**Sunday:** James 3-5**Monday:** Jeremiah 27-29**Tuesday:** Jeremiah 30-32**Wednesday:** Jeremiah 33-36**Thursday:** Jeremiah 37-39**Friday:** Jeremiah 40-42**Saturday:** Psalms 88-90*Verse to Remember**Draw near to God and he will draw
near to you. —James 4:8***NUMBER STRINGS**

Directions: Fill in the blank spaces with the correct numbers based on the “pattern” clue. Notice the example in letter A.

A. 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 (pattern is $\times 2$)B. 5, 13, 21, 29, __, __, __ (pattern is $+8$)C. 5, 7, 6, 8, 7, 9, 8, __, __, __, __ (pattern is $+2, -1$)D. 98, 93, 97, 92, 96, __, __, __, __ (pattern is $-5, +4$)E. 41, 39, 40, 38, 39, 37, 38, __, __, __ (pattern is $-2, +1$)F. 10, 6, 18, 14, 26, 22, 34, __, __, __ (pattern is $-4, +12$)G. 4, 20, 100, 500, __, __, __ (pattern is $\times 5$)**ADJECTIVE STRING:**

Adjectives are words that modify nouns. “The big boy hit a small ball.” In this sentence, “big” and “small” are adjectives. We will give you a NOUN, and then you must write an adjective that begins with its last letter, and then continue to add adjectives with the last letter of the previous word, until you can do no more.

Example: Motorcycle: eye-catching, green, new, wondrous, speedy. Here is your word:

RIVER. Write your responses below. Have fun!

ANSWERS: Number Strings

B. 37, 45, 53; C. 10, 9, 11, 10; D. 91, 95, 90, 94;
E. 36, 37, 35; F. 30, 42, 38; G. 2,500, 12,500,
62,500

Sunday, August 21, 2022

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 1:4-10

The best tunes are played on the oldest fiddles. —Ralph Waldo Emerson

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 78 million people 65 and older will reside in America by 2035. This figure will surpass the population under the age of 18 for the first time in the nation's history.

National Senior Citizens Day recognizes seniors who have spent their lives contributing to society and have impacted everyone's lives for the better. Improved healthcare has changed demographics and increased productivity of older citizens, allowing them to be more active than ever before. With more opportunities available as well, many senior citizens now begin second careers and are an example for younger generations. The country's foundation and stable sectors are the result of the hard work of our senior citizens, and they deserve all our gratitude.

President Ronald Reagan took the initiative to honor seniors in 1988 when he signed Proclamation 5847 and marked August 21 as the day seniors will be celebrated. "Throughout our history, older people have achieved much for our families, our communities, and our country. That remains true today, and gives us ample reason this year to reserve a special day in honor of the senior citizens who mean so much to our land," Reagan proclaimed. "For all they have achieved throughout life and for all they continue to accomplish, we owe older citizens our thanks and a heartfelt salute. We can best demonstrate our gratitude and esteem by making sure that our communities are good places in which to mature and grow older — places in which older people can participate to the fullest and can find the encouragement, acceptance, assistance, and services they need to continue to lead lives of independence and dignity."

His words have withstood the test of time and are now, over 30 years later, more important than ever as older people are leading more productive lives. Reagan himself set an example for everyone. He was 69 years old when one of the world's most powerful titles of president of the U.S. was given to him on January 20, 1981. Reagan lived till the ripe old age of 93, and not only was he the oldest person to be elected president, he was also the oldest when his term ended at 77 years and 349 days.

So, if you're a senior citizen, today the country honors you. And we here at *HomeTouch* wish you God's richest blessing, and we keep all of our readers continually in our prayers.

—Timothy Merrill, adapted from nationaltoday.com

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for the elders and seniors of our country. May we learn from them, and honor them as they continue life's journey. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: Galatians 1-3
Monday: Jeremiah 43-46
Tuesday: Jeremiah 47-49
Wednesday: Jeremiah 50-52
Thursday: Lamentations 1-5
Friday: 1 Chronicles 1-3
Saturday: Psalms 91-93

Verse to Remember

*You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide
in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the LORD,
“My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust.”*

—Psalm 91:1-2

MAGNIFICENT MYSTERIES!

Consider the riddles and enigmas below and prepare to have your mind challenged!

1. What was it that Adam never had and never saw yet gave to his children?
2. When does a chair hate you?
3. Which candle burns longer, a wax candle or a tallow candle?
4. What kind of clock shows the exact time twice a day, but is wrong at all other times?
5. What question can never be answered by “Yes”?

WORD MATCH

Directions: Below is a list of 10 compound words, but you need to draw lines from a word in the left column to a matching word in the right one. Write the new word (a compound word) in the space provided.

| | | |
|--------|--------|-------|
| door | line | _____ |
| jaw | brush | _____ |
| farm | worm | _____ |
| back | fish | _____ |
| earth | mat | _____ |
| air | ground | _____ |
| gold | house | _____ |
| candle | blot | _____ |
| hair | bone | _____ |
| ink | stick | _____ |

Solution: 1. Parents; 2. When it can't bear you. 3. Neither; they burn shorter. 4. A stopped clock. A stopped clock will show the correct time twice a day. 5. Are you asleep? WORD MATCH: doormat, jawbone, farmhouse, background, earthworm, airline, goldfish, candlestick, hairbrush, inkblot.

The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you got to put up with the rain. —Dolly Parton

Week of August 28, 2022

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: Galatians 4-6

Monday: 1 Chronicles 4-6

Tuesday: 1 Chronicles 7-9

Wednesday: 1 Chronicles 10-13

Thursday: 1 Chronicles 14-16

Friday: 1 Chronicles 17-19

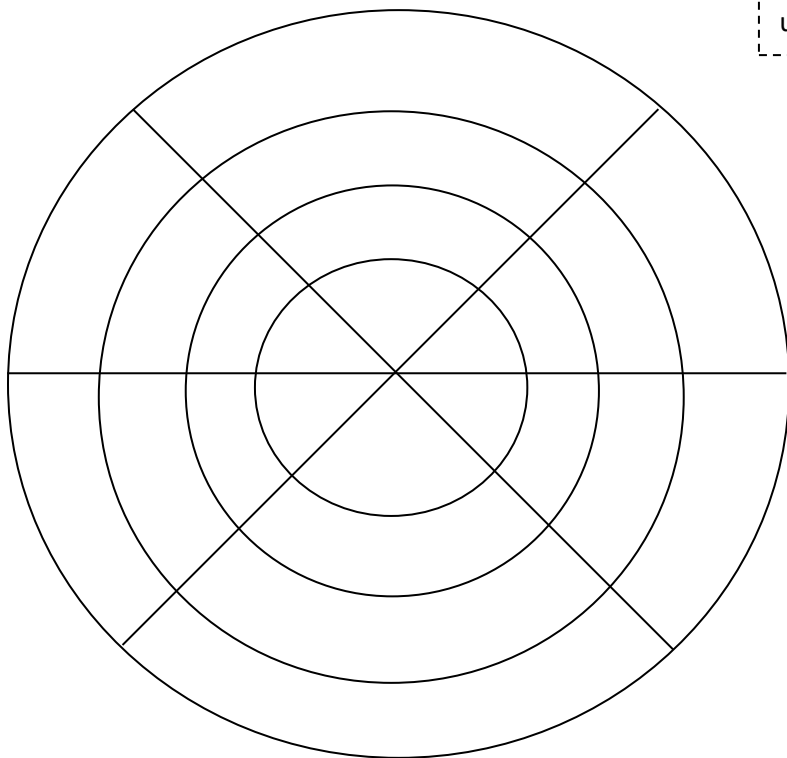
Saturday: Psalms 94-96

Verse to Remember

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

—Galatians 5:22-23

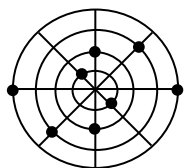
DOTS and CIRCLES: Can you place eight dots on the target below in such a way as to have two dots on every circle and two dots on each straight line?



TRIVIA: Test your general knowledge of rather unimportant facts from history and culture.

1. Which chess piece may only move along diagonals on the board?
2. What term for a non-rigid floating airship can be seen above sporting events, often sponsored by Goodyear?
3. What common condiment, often used on burgers, is made from seasoned puréed tomatoes?
4. What late 1950s fad supposedly got its name from the hip motions used in a Hawaiian dance?
5. What actress has more Oscar acting nominations than any other, but only won three times, most recently for 'The Iron Lady'?
6. What is the common name of the human bone called the patella?
7. What 5-letter acronymed American civil rights group was founded in 1909 by people including W.E.B. Du Bois and Ida B. Wells?
8. What bourbon-based cocktail is considered to be the official drink of the Kentucky Derby?
9. By what name was the Duke of Edinburgh, aka Queen Elizabeth's husband, better known as?

SOLUTION TO DOTS AND CIRCLES



ANSWERS TO TRIVIA:

1. Bishop,
2. Blimp,
3. Ketchup,
4. Hula hoop,
5. Meryl Streep,
6. Kneecap,
7. NAACP,
8. Mint Julep,
9. Prince Philip.