

Scripture Reading: Job 1:1, 2:1-10

Job never saw why he suffered, but he saw God and that was enough.
—Timothy Keller

The names Allen Stanford, Sean Quinn, MC Hammer and Jordan Belfort may not be familiar to you. These people were once filthy rich, but lost it all because of greed, bad decisions, bad luck, foolish gambles or for other reasons.

Yet millions of people suffer loss every day *through no fault of their own*. Their worlds are turned upside down because of disease or death. When actor Liam Neeson's wife, Natasha, Richardson, died, he said on the television program *60 Minutes*, "It hits you. It's like a wave. You just get this profound feeling of instability. The Earth isn't stable anymore"

The ancient patriarch Job was one of these innocent sufferers. The story of Job, told in part in the Scripture reading above, is one that speaks to all those who are suffering in mental or physical anguish. It's the story of an innocent, righteous person whose faith remains intact in spite of the unspeakable tragedy that afflicts him.

Not the least of Job's problems is that *God seems to be complicit* in the suffering. The Scripture reading above opens in heaven where God and Satan are having a conversation. God notes that his servant Job is "a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil" (2:3). But Satan says that anyone who has been blessed with riches and good health like Job would be careful not to bite the hand that feeds him. Then God (this is the hard part) allows Satan to test Job.

The test has two parts. Part A is in chapter 1 in which Job's worldly possessions — including cattle and sons and daughters — are destroyed. Part B is in chapter 2 in which Job is still grieving over the loss of his family and material wealth. Now Satan takes away Job's health and attacks his body with all manner of sores and disabilities. Job has been completely reduced, broken, humiliated. He's alive — but barely.

Yet, ignoring the advice of his wife and his friends, and laying aside his own doubts, Job did not abandon his faith in God, and in fact it was his faith that carried him through those terrible times. He had no way of knowing that his steadfast faith would ultimately be rewarded.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: O God, help me when I suffer in body and soul to cling to you as my rock and my refuge. Amen.

Week of October 3, 2021

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: 1 Corinthians 1-5

Monday: Ezekiel 22-28

Tuesday: Ezekiel 29-35

Wednesday: Ezekiel 36-41

Thursday: Ezekiel 42-48

Friday: Daniel 1-6

Saturday: Psalms 109-113

FALL FUN!

Unscramble the letters in each leaf below and write the word on the line provided. Each word is appropriate for the fall season. Notice the lowercase letters in the leaves. Unscramble these eight letters to form **two words** that reveal an American favorite, and write in the empty leaves below.

BREaM

RENOAG

AFLLeNN

MKppIUN

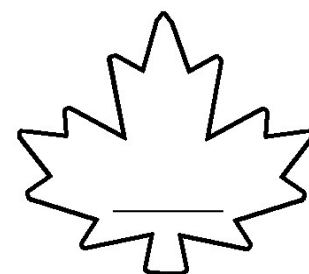
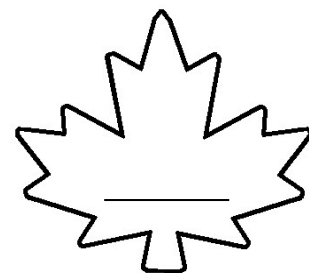
VEAIES

HCTENUSTS

HRAeVST

IELCpFAER

EiCRD



SOLUTION: BREaM=amber;
RENOAG=orange;
AFLLeNN=flannel;
MKppIUN=pumpkin;
VEAIES=leaves;
HCTENUSTS=chestnuts;
HRAeVST=harvest;
IELCpFAER=fireplace;
EiCRD=cider.
SECRET WORDS: apple pie.

October 3, 2021, is World Communion Sunday

Scripture Reading: Mark 10:17-31

Never let fear decide your fate. —Anon.

Goats are funny creatures. Some would call them odd, cantankerous and completely devoid of impulse control.

One of the most unusual breeds is the so-called “fainting goats” of Marshall County, Tennessee. Also known as “falling goat” or the “Tennessee wooden-leg” goat, these critters are unique in that at the sound of a sudden noise or the appearance of a predator, they collapse in a catatonic state in which they’re utterly rigid. In this state, they usually topple to the ground as though dead. Rigor mortis sets in.

Of course, after the noise subsides, or the predator is gone, life returns to their limbs and they stand up, shake it off and go on their way.

The story of the Rich Young Ruler in today’s reading from the gospel of Mark reminds me of these falling goats.

Here’s a young man who wants to be a disciple of Jesus. He’s a fine fellow of strong moral character and apparently has an outstanding reputation in the community.

Jesus knows this. He even commends the young man on how he has conducted himself in life so far.

So Jesus agrees that this unnamed fellow should be one of his disciples — with one proviso: He needs to sell all of his possessions and give them to the poor.

At this point, the hitherto eager and very wealthy man goes into a catatonic state, suddenly freezing like a Tennessee fainting goat! Suddenly, he senses a threat to the wealth he has carefully accumulated in his young life. His breath constricts. Breathing is difficult. His hand goes to his throat. It is all he can do to turn and walk away.

The fellow has been seized by fear. He’s in love with his money. And so he turns down the opportunity of a lifetime. We never hear of him again.

Fear had paralyzed him.

What causes us to freeze with fear?

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Heavenly Father, today in faith I stand against fear. You provide what I need. Therefore, I need fear nothing. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: 1 Corinthians 6-10

Monday: Daniel 7-9

Tuesday: Daniel 10-12

Wednesday: Esther 1-3

Thursday: Esther 4-7

Friday: Esther 8-10

Saturday: Psalms 114-118

The Letter "O"

The nine words below are spelled correctly, except they are missing one letter — O. Use these incomplete words to complete the verse below where you will find all the missing O's!

S, NE, ANOTHER, GD, LVED, UGHT, T, ALS, LVE

Dear friends, since ___o___ ___o___

___o___ ___ us, we ___ ___ ___o___

o___ ___ ___ ___o___ ___o___

o___ ___ ___o___ ___

Verse to Remember

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.

—1 Corinthians 10:31

Solution to The Letter "O" puzzle

"Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" —1 John 4:11.

BRAIN TEASERS:

1. There are three houses. One is red, one is blue, and one is white. If the red house is to the left of the house in the middle, and the blue house is to the right of the house in the middle, where is the white house?
2. A farmer has 17 sheep and all but nine die. How many are left?

October 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						



"October made the leaves on Main Street fit for a crown. They dripped from the trees in jewel-toned shades: yellow and orange and fiery red. The cool wind sent a confetti-cluster of leaves down around us." — Natalie Lloyd

SOLUTION TO BRAIN TEASERS
1: Washington, D.C.
Answer to 2: nine.

Scripture Reading: Mark 10:35-45

It's nice to be important, but it is more important to be nice. —John Templeton

I'm guessing that someone in your family told you, "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all." This is such a popular truism, that we might chuckle, because we remember our moms or grandmassaying this to us, perhaps with a finger in our faces.

We're fortunate if we grew up with "nice" values. And if we were raised that way, you no doubt raised your own children with the philosophy of "nice" in mind. This philosophy can be summed up in the words, "be nice." So you taught your children to say nice things, not naughty things. You insisted that your kids play nice and do nice things for others.

One person who has put this philosophy to work is Deirdre Freeman. She is a painter in the San Francisco Bay Area. Every week, she'll walk a mile or so to a busy corner with a large tote bag. In the bag are a hammer, nails and a colorful painting of a heart or hearts with some other random designs. She hangs the artwork, or what she calls her "heartwork," on a telephone post. She calls it a love and kindness movement. Her goal is to get people smiling and feeling a little love. Known by many as the heart lady, she is succeeding.

Freeman brings a little sunshine to her corner of the world. She's doing something nice. She's being nice. She is putting into action the words of the Sunday school chorus:

*Brighten the corner where you are!
Brighten the corner where you are!
Someone far from harbor "YOU" may guide across the bar;
Brighten the corner where you are!*

This is what the apostle Paul had in mind when he told the Christians at Ephesus, "be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:32).

Today, let's take a light to our corner of the world and brighten it up a bit. Put on a smile, write a note of thanks, give someone a kind or encouraging word. Pray about it. God will give you guidance.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Lord Jesus, teach me more about your philosophy of nice. In your name. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: 1 Corinthians 11-16

Monday: Ezra 1-4

Tuesday: Haggai 1-2; Zechariah 1-2

Wednesday: Zechariah 3-6

Thursday: Zechariah 7-10

Friday: Zechariah 11-14

Saturday: Psalm 119

Verse to Remember

*Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path. —Psalm 119:105*



WATER GLASS PROBLEM

Take three (3) empty water glasses and put them in a row. Turn the first and third glasses upside down, but leave the middle glass right side up. *Your task is to get all the glasses right side up, but you must follow these rules:*

1. You have only three moves.
2. For each move, you must turn over two glasses at a time — never one at a time.

SOLUTION TO CUP PROBLEM:
First move: Turn over the first and second glasses
Second move: Turn over the first and third glasses
Third move: Turn over the first and second glasses. At this point they should be all right side up.



**Answers to
ROMAN
NUMERALS :**
 1. Tacoma
 2. Denver
 3. Dallas
 4. Miami
 5. Phoenix
 6. Atlanta
 7. Boise
 8. Cheyenne
 9. Helena
 10. Provo

ROMAN NUMERALS

Directions: Add a Roman numeral to the scrambled word, and then unscramble to come up with a city in the United States.

Example:

iphsem + 1,000 = *Memphis*

1. moata + 100 = _____

2. eendr + 5 = _____

3. Isaad + 50 = _____

4. amii + 1,000 = _____

5. onepih + 10 = _____

6. natata + 50 = _____

7. sobe + 1 = _____

8. yeehne + 100 = _____

9. eeahan + 50 = _____

10. ropo + 5 = _____

Scripture Reading: Mark 10:46-52

Friends are the sunshine of life. —John Hay

One of the down sides of growing old is that you start to lose your friends. The really cool thing about having a friend is that you know he or she is willing to take risks on your behalf. It is hard to lose them; it's like losing a piece of yourself.

A friend who takes risks is the person who stands beside you in a time of crisis, who makes sure you don't get in harm's way, or, if you do, tries to get you out of it as soon and safely as possible.

In the Bible, the themes of loyalty, faithfulness, kindness and mercy are expressed by one word: *chesed*. What is intriguing about this word is that there often is a risk factor in dispensing this kindness.

Ruth, for example, expressed her faithfulness to her mother-in-law by refusing to leave her. "Whither thou goest, I will go ..." (1:16, KJV). As a Moabite, and a Moabite *woman*, this was a foolhardy decision, even if Naomi was her patroness. In taking on the responsibility of protecting her daughter-in-law, Naomi likewise made a risky choice. In advocating for Ruth's future security, she was even more daring. She proposed a scheme to hook up Ruth with Boaz that would have spelled disaster had it been discovered.

Think, too, of Jonathan's friendship with David at the very time when his father was trying to destroy David. Jonathan was a friend to David when David desperately needed a friend. But expressing kindness and mercy is not without risk and perhaps cost.

Humanitarian gestures, random acts of kindness and doing good things that do not involve courage, daring and risk are certainly important, and no one would say otherwise. But showing *chesed* — loving-kindness and faithfulness — sometimes calls for risk-taking.

This is one reason we value our friends and mourn them when they pass away.

But we ourselves can continue to express the biblical idea of *chesed* by being a faithful friend to those around us.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for the friends with whom I have been blessed throughout my life. Help me to be a faithful and supporting friend as you have been to me. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: Acts 19:11-41,

2 Corinthians 1-3

Monday: Ezra 5-7

Tuesday: Ezra 8-10

Wednesday: Nehemiah 1-3

Thursday: Nehemiah 4-6

Friday: Nehemiah 7-9

Saturday: Psalms 120-124

Verse to Remember

*I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?
My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.*

—Psalm 121:1-2



“C” IF YOU CAN COMPLETE THIS BIBLE TRIVIA QUIZ!

All correct answers begin with the letter C. Circle the correct answer.

1. What was Nehemiah's occupation? centurion, cook, carpenter, cupbearer
2. Who was the Bible's first murderer? Caleb, Cain, Caiaphas, Cush
3. Where did Jesus perform his first miracle? Caesarea, Capernaum, Cana
4. Which of these books contains the great chapter about love? 2 Chronicles, 1 Corinthians, Colossians, 2 Corinthians
5. A man named Simon was forced to carry the cross to Golgotha for Jesus. Where was he from? Cyrene, Caesarea, Cush, Chicago
6. Which of these “C” words has nothing to do with the crucifixion of Jesus? crown, cross, Calvary, cypress

ON THE RECORD!

Who made the following statements as read in the Bible? Circle the correct answer.

1. “Am I my brother's keeper?” Samuel, John, Cain, Andrew
2. “Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have I give unto you.” Peter, James, John, Paul
3. “What is truth?” Herod, Pilate, Simon Magus, Cornelius
4. “Choose you this day whom you will serve, but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD!” Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua
5. “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” Nathaniel, John, Peter, Paul
6. “Almost you persuade me to become a Christian.” Herod Agrippa, Pilate, Caiaphas, Annas
7. “Entreat me not to leave you for your people will be my people. Where you lodge, I will lodge.” Rebekah, Rachel, Ruth, Rahab
8. “I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith.” Paul, Peter, James, Barnabas

ANSWERS TO “C” IF YOU CAN COMPLETE THIS BIBLE TRIVIA QUIZ!: 1. cupbearer; 2. Cain; 3. Cana; 4. 1 Corinthians; 5. Cyrene; 6. cypress.

ANSWERS TO “ON THE RECORD!: 1. Cain; 2. Peter; 3. Pilate; 4. Joshua; 5. Peter; 6. Herod Agrippa; 7. Ruth; 8. Paul.

Scripture Reading: Mark 12:28-34

Peace is the best journey; happiness the best destination. —Anon.

People generally like to live close to family. Not too close, but close. But what if you lived in Neah Bay, Washington, and had grandchildren living in Key West, Florida? According to some students of geography, these two cities are 3,644 away from each other, the furthest distance between cities in the contiguous 48 states! That's a long way to travel to see one's family. A trip from San Diego to Lubec, Maine, would cover 3,340 miles!

Jesus brings up the question of distance in today's Bible reading when he makes a reference to the kingdom of God.

How far are you from the kingdom of God? On the face of it, the question suggests that getting to the kingdom of God is a matter of distance. This implies that a journey or trip is involved.

In the gospel of Mark, Jesus says to a highly religious fellow known as a "scribe" that "You are not far from the kingdom of God."

I wonder if the scribe wondered, "Well, how close am I?"

When we were kids, and we took trips with our parents in the Ford or Chevy to one of the national parks, we asked this question a lot, didn't we? "How much farther, dad?" This is the same thing as asking, "Are we getting close?"

We wanted to know the distance. We wanted to know how far we were from our destination.

The scribe in the Bible reading was close to the kingdom, but he was not there yet. I wonder why not? Perhaps this was Jesus' way of saying to the educated scribe, "Hey, my friend, you get it."

According to Jesus, here's how you can tell that you're very close to the kingdom of God: If you love God with your "all" and your neighbor as yourself, and if you understand that this is more important than any religious ritualistic practices, then you are close to the kingdom of God.

Does this describe you?

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Help me this week, Lord Jesus, to love you with all my heart, and to love others as I love myself. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: 2 Corinthians 4-6

Monday: Nehemiah 10-13

Tuesday: Micah 1-4

Wednesday: 2 Corinthians 7-9

Thursday: 2 Corinthians 10-13

Friday: Acts 20-22

Saturday: Psalms 125-128

THE BOOK OF ACTS WORD SEARCH

The words in the list below are from stories in the book of Acts. Find the words forward, backward or diagonally in either direction.



Verse to Remember

Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it.

—Psalm 127:1

H	N	A	I	P	O	I	H	T	E	E	Q	S	D	L
O	J	E	R	U	S	A	L	E	M	A	Z	A	G	N
L	P	G	I	Z	T	A	G	E	J	S	M	C	B	E
Y	R	E	C	R	O	S	I	P	Y	A	Q	R	S	H
S	A	N	H	E	D	R	I	N	S	B	V	O	A	P
P	Y	T	H	G	I	L	A	C	A	A	V	D	Z	E
I	E	I	C	T	I	G	U	S	E	N	O	T	S	T
R	R	L	J	H	O	S	K	A	I	R	A	M	A	S
I	W	E	P	G	A	E	P	L	Y	A	O	H	U	C
T	E	S	U	I	T	R	R	X	A	B	P	S	L	R
B	N	E	B	A	P	T	I	Z	E	K	E	P	O	S
C	C	H	U	R	C	H	S	O	K	J	T	A	O	H
K	E	T	M	T	T	G	O	R	T	H	E	U	I	J
N	O	M	I	S	G	C	N	N	P	B	R	L	J	U

Ananias	baptize	Barnabas	basket	chariot	church	Damascus	Dorcas
Ethiopian	Gaza	Gentiles	Holy Spirit	Jerusalem	Jesus	Joppa	light
Paul	Peter	Philip	prayer	prison	Samaria	Sanhedrin	Saul
Simon	sorcery	Stephen	stones	Straight	synagogue		

Kid Jokes: Here are a few riddles to tell your grandchildren or a little kid you might run into:

Question: What do whales like to chew? Answer: blubber gum! Question: How do rabbits travel?

Answer: by hareplane! Question: I have a tail and a head, but no body. What am I? Answer: a

coin. Question: What two things can you never eat for breakfast? Answer: lunch and dinner.

Question: Which word becomes shorter when you add two letters to it? Answer: the word "short."

Question: I can fill a room, but I take up no space. What am I? Answer: light.