

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?

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.

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.

