

Tropinkka

The Little Path

Christian Magazine for Kids



Exploring Faith
With Friends
Around the World!



Happy
Easter!

Issue #2
2011

By Ilya VEZIKOV

HE IS ALIVE

There is a cry from the mountaintops
Which every person on earth should heed,
The Christ who came and then died for us,
He is alive; He is risen indeed!

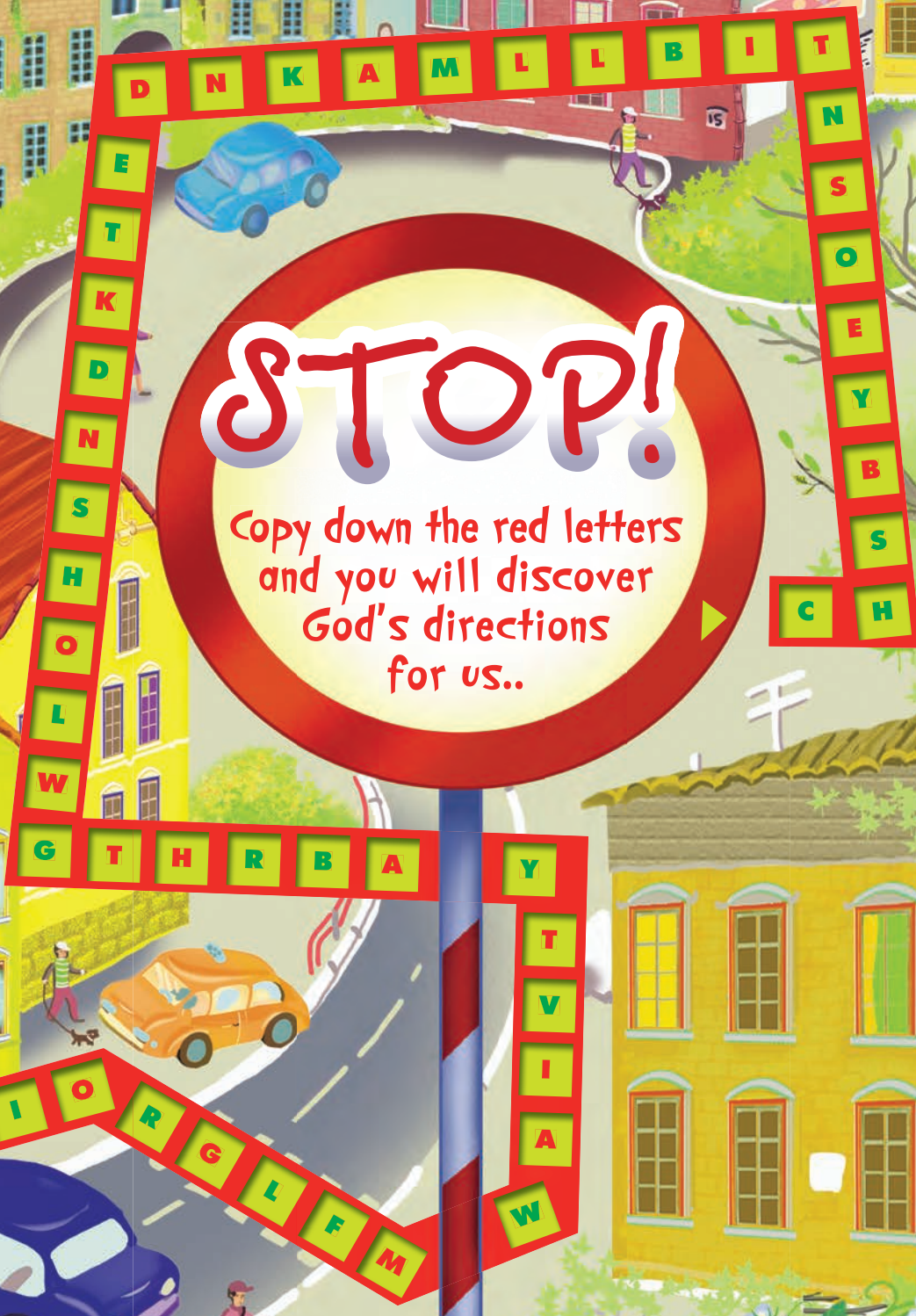
Jesus came to earth to give us life;
He gave us victory over sin.
Now children, if we trust and obey,
In heaven, we will be with Him.

Jesus gives us joy and hope and peace,
He is a good friend in every way,
And though He died to save our lives,
He is alive this Easter day!

Illustrated by Victoria DUNAYEVA

STOP!

Copy down the red letters
and you will discover
God's directions
for us..



OUT OF LOVE FOR GOD *Part 2*

Elena MIKULA

"Let's get to work!" Peter looked down at the cardboard model of the stone tablets he had cut out the day before and smiled.



"We can fold this piece of paper in half and write out the first commandment," Mary said. "We have to make sure all of it fits. This commandment is a long one but my Sunday School teacher said we could make it a little shorter. I'll read the whole thing and then we can decide what we're going to write."

Opening her Bible, Mary read, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me."

"How about we write 'I am your God'?" Peter suggested.

"No, that won't work!" Mary exclaimed. "We have to write the part about other gods, the ones that aren't real. If we leave that out it sounds like everyone can have their own god."

Peter thought for a moment, then said, "Let's write 'I am the LORD your God. You shall have no other gods before me.'"



"Perfect! That's just what we need," Mary agreed. She picked up a marker and carefully wrote out the letters.

Peter paused to watch her, and then began flipping through the pages of the Bible.

"Why did God write this commandment first when He put the Ten Commandments on stone tablets? Is it the most important one?" he asked, turning toward Mary. "The most important things are always written at the beginning."

"You're right, this could be the most important one because what's most important is knowing and loving God. I'm going to write a shorter version of it on the paper so that it fits, but I'm sure the Israelites didn't summarize the first commandment. They read the whole thing and always remembered that God brought them out of slavery." Mary looked up from her writing. "They were very thankful that God freed them and taught their children to thank, love, and obey God from a young age. They sang the words of God's law in songs, and they still sing these kinds of songs today."



Peter remembered seeing something about that in a movie. "Yeah, they blew trumpets and sang. The movie I saw also showed a dad teaching his son about the little boxes they wore on their arms and foreheads. Those boxes had the Law in them."

Mary continued writing. Peter was silent for a moment. Then, in a quiet, serious voice he said, "My dad never told me about God; Mom didn't either. Only Grandma talked about Him. She said God would punish me if I were naughty. That's how I learned to fear God. As it turns out, we're supposed to love Him."

Putting the marker down, Mary looked at Peter. "God doesn't want us to be scared of Him. Instead, we should love and respect Him so much that we're afraid to sin and do the things that displease Him. God loves us, but He hates sin. Sin always has consequences."

It can lead a person far away from God, but God loves us so much that he's always willing to forgive us," Mary explained.

"You really think so? I have this friend at school that took his older brother's binoculars apart without asking for permission because he wanted to see how they worked. Then he couldn't put them back together, so he hid the parts in the garage and told his brother he didn't know where the binoculars were. What's he supposed to do now?"



"Will God forgive him? And what's to be done with the binoculars?" Peter's voice trembled as he spoke.

Mary quickly figured out who he was talking about. "I think I know this boy," she said.

Peter sighed. "Yes, it's me. If I tell Jim about the binoculars, he'll kill me! Can God really help me with this?"

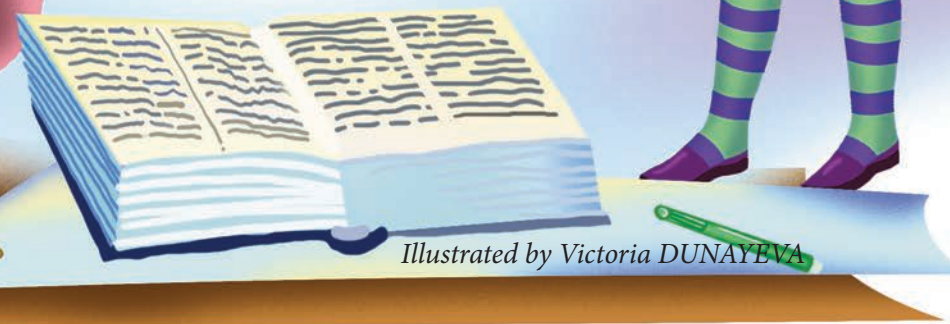
"God can do anything. You pray and ask God to forgive you and help you, and then I'll tell you something."

Peter quietly prayed to God and rubbed the tears from his eyes. Mary smiled and said, "Go get the binoculars. My neighbor has a shop where he fixes all sorts of things. He can put the binoculars back together."

"But I don't have any money to pay for that!" Peter objected.

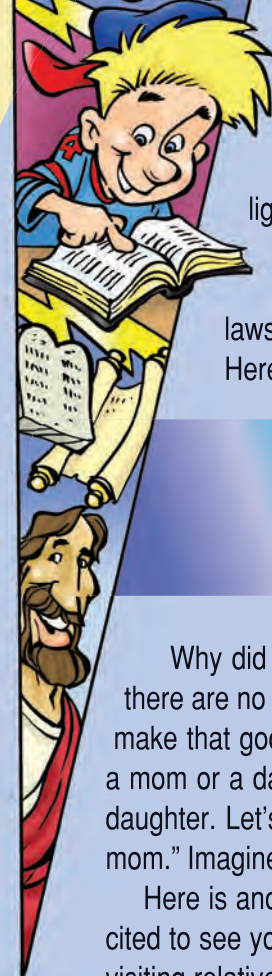
"My neighbor also knows and loves God. He'll be happy to help you," Mary said with confidence.

(To be continued)



Illustrated by Victoria DUNAYEVA

BIBLE BASICS



The First Commandment

There are lots and lots of traffic laws. People have to study these laws and pass a test and get a license, but even those who have never taken the test understand the basic rules. For example, everyone knows to stop for a red light. Not stopping could get you killed.

God gave His people many commandments, including some very important ones. We can think of these key commandments as a constitution or the basic laws of God and His Kingdom. Today, we're going to talk about the first commandment. Here it is:

**I am the LORD your God...
You shall have no other gods before me.
(Exodus 20:2-3)**



Why did God give people this commandment? It is because He is the only God and there are no others. Even if people worship someone or something else as god, it doesn't make that god real. Let me explain. You have a mom and a dad. Maybe you only have one parent, a mom or a dad. Anyway, your mom loves you very much. She gave birth to you. You're her son or daughter. Let's say for some strange reason you said, "I would like the next door neighbor to be my mom." Imagine how much that would hurt your mom.

Here is another example. It's the first day of school. You come a little early because you're so excited to see your best friend. You haven't seen him for a long time, since he spent the entire summer visiting relatives in another state. As you're about to walk into the classroom you hear your name and know someone is talking about you. (Now you're not trying to eavesdrop; you just happen to be walking in at that moment.) You recognize the voice that's speaking; it's your friend. He says, "No, Steve and I aren't friends. We just live in the same apartment building." Your stomach feels like it's twisting into a knot. This is your friend who's talking. He went with you to Sunday School and the church youth camp. You thought he would soon accept Jesus into his heart. Now you cringe at the things he's saying.

I have one more illustration. Let's say you're in love. You want the person you love to always be with you and to talk with you. Basically, you want to be the most important person in that person's life. That's normal because God made us this way.

There is only one God. He is the One Who created the world. He sent His only son, Jesus Christ, into this world to that we could have eternal life. He has given us everything we need in this life and the next. God loves us very much. He wants us to love Him, too. Only He can keep us safe from evil. Only He is powerful enough to save us and bless us. That's why He says, "You shall have no other gods before me."

Waldemar ZORN

Natasha BOYKOV

CREATION



Today at school the textbook said:
There's no creator, and instead
Of being formed by God from dust,
We came from monkeys and we must
Have changed and grown, evolving 'til,
We got our present mind and will.

It said the stars out there in space,
Those twinkling lights God hung in place,
Took millions of years to form.
It said the sun, which keeps us warm,
Was not designed by anyone
'Cause spinning gasses made the sun.

The textbooks guess how life began,
What formed the earth, the stars, and man.
To find the truth let's take a look
At the Bible, God's special book.
We learn God made all things with care
And we trust His Word since He was there!

Illustrated by Inna KOZINA



Did you know...

The famous astronomer, Johannes Kepler, said "Great is God our Lord, great is His power and there is no end to His wisdom. Praise Him you heavens. Glorify Him, sun and moon and you planets. For out of Him and through Him, and in Him are all things."



Compiled and Illustrated by Elena MIKULA

Matthew 18:22

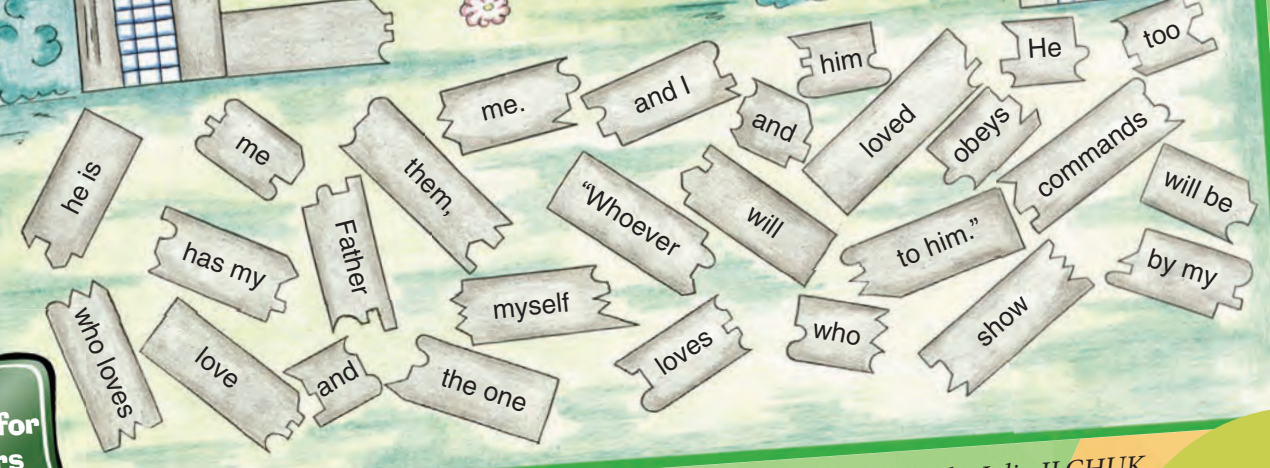


RUNNER

How many times did Jesus command us to forgive?

Put the broken wall of the castle together to read a verse from the Bible.

Read the Verse!



See page 31 for answers

Compiled and Illustrated by Julia ILCHUK

AN ALTAR TO THE UNKNOWN GOD

Waldemar ZORN

For a long time, the Apostle Paul wanted to visit Athens, the cultural capital of the ancient world. As he traveled from the seaport into this city, he saw many idols set up alongside the road. Just about every god a person could imagine was there as an idol. Once he got to the city, Paul left the city wall behind him and walked through the narrow streets and wide city squares toward the center of the city. He came to the Areopagus, which sat on a hill that rose above the rest of the city. The main temple of the Greeks, called the Parthenon, decorated the hilltop. It was dedicated to Athena, the goddess for whom the city was named.

People called Athens the capital of the gods – that's how many gods there were in the city! The idols

representing these gods came from many different countries. The Apostle Paul saw a lot of things during his travels, but never had he seen this much idolatry. He started talking to the people about what they believed. First, he went to the synagogue and met with the Jews and Greeks who worshipped the true and living God. Since people only gathered at the synagogue on Saturdays, Paul then went on to talk to people about their faith, in the streets and in the city squares. He told these people about the one, true God Who created the world. They didn't know this God or Jesus Christ, who had risen from the dead. While talking to the people, Paul met philosophers who saw themselves as the authority for answering questions about religion in Athens. They invited Paul to come and present his teaching before the influential people of the city.

That's how Paul got to preach at the Areopagus, the meeting place of the Athenian authorities. The people who gathered there often came to discuss history, philosophy, and religion.

This hilltop was where, six hundred years earlier, Epimenides gave the Athenians a very strange suggestion. He said they should build an altar to the unknown god.

At that time, the Athenians suffered from a plague. When they built the altar the plague ended.

The Apostle Paul knew this story. He knew about Epimenides and even quoted this poet in a letter to Titus.

Standing before the Athenians, Paul said, "Men of Athens! I see that you are very religious in every way. As I walked around, I looked carefully at the things you worship. I even found an altar with 'to an unknown god' written on it. Now I am going to tell you about this 'unknown god' that you worship." Paul continued his speech against the backdrop of the beautiful Parthenon, which towered over the Areopagus where they had gathered. "He is the God who made the world. He also made everything in it.

He is the Lord of heaven and earth. He doesn't live in temples built by hands. He is not served by human hands. He doesn't need anything. He himself gives life and breath to all people. He also gives them everything else they have. From one man he made all the people of the world. Now they live all over the earth. He decided exactly when they should live. And he decided exactly where they should live. God did this so that people would seek him. Then perhaps they would reach out for him and find him. They would find him even though he is not far from any of us. 'In him we live and move and exist.' As some of your own poets have also said, 'We are his children.'"

Paul's message was very convincing. The people listened quietly. They must have understood that something wasn't quite right in their worship. However, when they heard what the Apostle Paul said next, they got very noisy. What did Paul say to cause all this commotion?

"Yes, we are God's children. So we shouldn't think that God is made out of gold or silver or stone. He isn't a statue planned and made by clever people. In the past, God didn't judge people for what they didn't know. But now he commands all people everywhere to turn away from their sins. He has set a day when he will judge the world fairly. He has appointed a man to be its judge. God has proved this to all people by raising that man from the dead."

Paul was speaking about Jesus Christ, but the philosophers started making fun of Paul when they heard him talking about a resurrection from the dead. Others said, "Come back later. We want to hear more about what you have to say." Seeing that they had stopped listening to him, Paul left the meeting. The philosophers continued to argue about what Paul had said, but some believed him and became Paul's followers. Those who believed included Dionysius and a woman named Damaris. History tells us that Dionysius later became the first Christian pastor at Athens.



This story about the Apostle Paul visiting the Areopagus in Athens is found in the 17th chapter of Acts, beginning with verse 16.

Ruth FREY

Get out of here!



“Kai Kang, we’re going home!” Grabbing his son’s arm, Sun Leung pulled the boy out of the missionary school.

“Did I do something wrong? Why is Father so angry? How have I upset him? Why did he pull me out of the class?” ten-year-old Kai Kang wondered in horror. Then he figured it out. “Today is Ancestors Day.” Just the thought of it made him tremble. “What will happen now? I can’t do what Father wants. I can’t make the offering to the dead.”

What was he to do? This day for remembering the dead was one of the most important holidays in China. On this day, boys made an offering to the dead ancestors of their family. They believed this gave the dead strength to continue their long, dark journey through the afterlife. Girls were not allowed to make the offering. Kai Kang knew what awaited him at the house – a tray with fried chicken, four cups of wine, and two chopsticks. “But I can’t make the offering,” he said to himself. “I belong to Jesus. He’s my Savior and I love Him. The ancestors died a long time ago. This food won’t help them. What do I do? Father doesn’t understand me. He hates hearing about Jesus Christ.”

Sun Leung walked quickly. The boy followed his father. He knew one thing – he was not going to make the offering to the dead. When they reached the house, Sun Leung thrust the tray into his son’s arms.

“You are the only son of the honorable Leung family. Now fulfill your duty as a son. Kneel and make the offering.”

The strong man forced the boy to get down on his knees. Kai Kang didn’t move. Several minutes passed.

Then the boy raised his head and said, “Father, our honorable ancestors are dead. They can not eat.”



“Do as you’re told! I’m the master here. Who are you to try to teach me?”

The boy kept stalling, then in a quiet voice he said, “Father, I love Jesus. I can’t make the offering to the dead.” As he spoke, he slowly rose from his knees.

“Kai Kang, don’t talk to me about Jesus. You must obey me. You are my son and you are the only one who can make the offering to our ancestors. Obey me this instant! Do you hear me?”

The father stood in front of his son and glared down at him. What would he do next? The boy trembled with fear, yet he shook his head and said, “Father, I love you, but I can’t obey you this time. I love Jesus even more.” His eyes filled with tears and his voice cracked as he said, “Father, I can’t worship ancestors.”

These words filled Kai Kang’s father with rage. He clenched his fists and asked, “Then who will make the offering for me when I die? Don’t you understand? You are the only son in this family. Won’t you take care of your own father after he’s gone?”

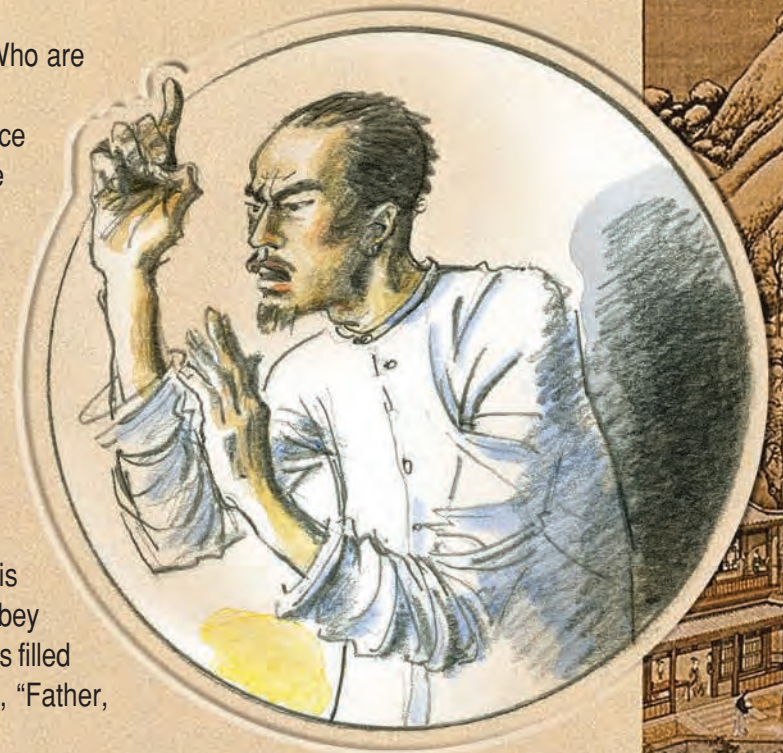
The father couldn’t imagine anything more horrible than the thought that came into his head. “No one will make offerings for me when I die. I’ll be completely alone on my journey through the afterlife.” He knew he had to force Kai Kang to honor the ancestors. Glaring down at the boy he shouted, “Do as I say. Get on your knees!”

The boy once again found himself on his knees with the tray shaking in his hands. Again, he didn’t move. It felt like his heart was being torn in two. He loved his father and wanted to obey him. “How many times have I tried telling Father about Jesus? He won’t listen. If only he could understand that people don’t need offerings after they die. If Father became a follower of Jesus he wouldn’t be afraid anymore. This time I can’t do what he says. I want to obey him, but I can’t because I belong to Jesus Christ.” A long, difficult battle raged in Kai Kang’s heart.

Father stood motionless in front of him. He did not understand his son. Why did the boy refuse to do his duty? Last year, he made the offering without any hesitation. What could have changed him? Did this teaching about Jesus really have this kind of power? Kai Kang had to perform the ceremony. He had to! There was no other choice! The father broke the oppressive silence.

“How long do I have to wait, son?”

The boy didn’t answer. He continued to kneel with the tray in his hands. Shaking his head, the boy quietly, but firmly said, “Father, I cannot do it.”



Calling down curses on the boy, the father jerked him up and snatched the tray out of his hands. "If you won't make the offering, then you don't deserve to belong to the Leung family. Get out of here and don't come back! Or..." he lowered his voice and pleaded with his son. "Or have you decided to make the offering, Kai Kang? Don't you love your father?"

The boy was miserable. Would Father really throw him out of the house? How could he bear it? Yet he knew he couldn't make the offering to the dead ancestors.

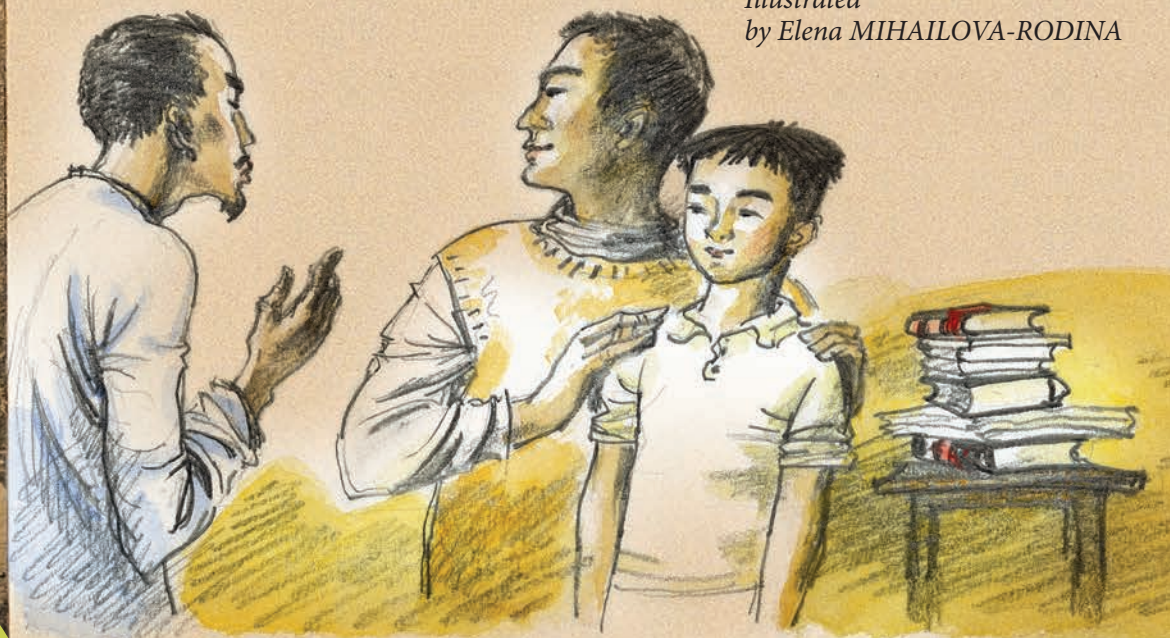
Father led the ten-year-old boy out to the gate and pushed back the bolt. "Son, listen to me," he said. "It's not too late to come back."

Kai Kang's voice trembled, but he wouldn't change his mind. "Jesus Christ is my Savior. If only you knew him, Father. Then you wouldn't worship the ancestors." "Enough of this nonsense! Go!"

Kai Kang took several shaky steps and stopped. Behind him, he heard the heavy bolt slide into place. He was alone. What now? Would he have to sleep out on the street? Who would feed him and take care of him? He slowly wandered down the road. Suddenly, he remembered his teacher. Maybe the teacher would help him. Maybe he was still at school. The boy knocked on the school door. The teacher let him in and nervously listened to Kai Kang's sad story. As they tried to figure out what to do, there came another knock at the door. Seeing his father, Kai Kang almost shouted with surprise.

Sun Leung stammered and said, "Honored teacher, tell me about this Jesus. If he can make a boy so strong that he would rather leave his home than renounce his faith, I want to know more about it. There must be something special about Jesus."

Illustrated by Elena MIHAILOVA-RODINA



Did you know...

Michelangelo claimed Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. He believed Christ's blood cleanses us from all sin.

THE DESERT OF SHUR

Created by Natasha BOYKOV

M	X	N	Z	Y	R	E	T	T	I	B	W	C
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AARON

MOSES

DESERT

SINAI

MARAH

BITTER

LOVE

SLAVERY

MIRIAM

WATER

WILDERNESS

EGYPTIANS

ISRAELITES

COMMANDMENT

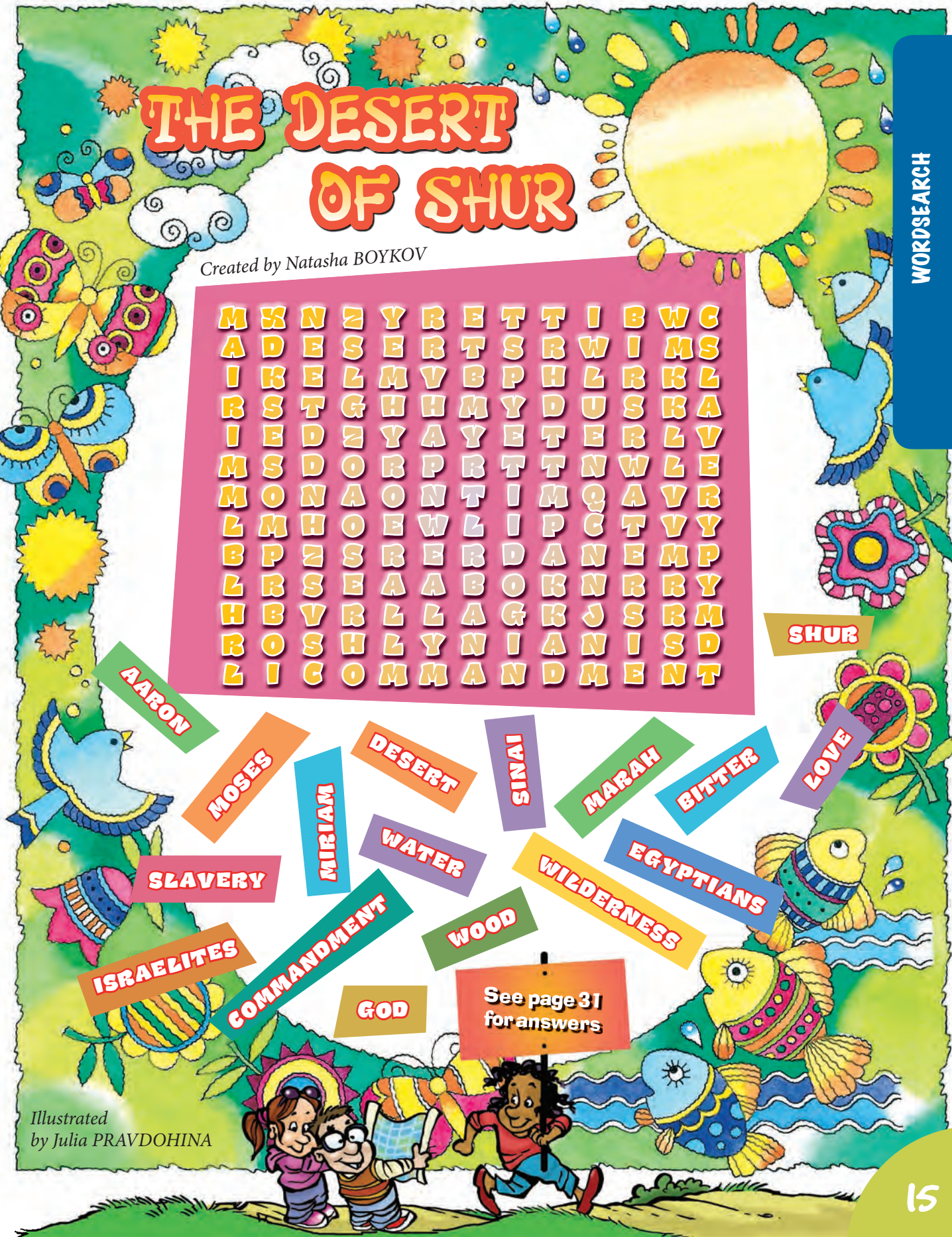
WOOD

GOD

See page 31 for answers

SHUR

Illustrated by Julia PRAVDOHINA



CROSSWORD

Solve the crossword!



ACROSS

1. John the Baptist told people to do this because the kingdom of heaven was near. (Matthew 3:2)
3. God commanded the Israelites not to make any of these things that stood for false gods. (Exodus 34:17)
6. Where did the philosophers bring Paul when they heard him preach about Jesus and the resurrection? (Acts 17:18-19)
9. When this person healed a lame man, the crowd thought he was Hermes and wanted to offer sacrifices to him. (Acts 14:8-13)
12. Jesus told Martha, "I am the _____ and the life. The one who believes in me will live." (John 11:24-25)
14. In Athens, Paul found an altar dedicated to this kind of god. (Acts 17:23)
15. Jesus was called the king of what people group? (Mark 15:26)
16. Paul was forced to leave the place he was visiting and go to Athens because Jews from this city came and stirred up trouble. (Acts 17:13)

DOWN

2. A group of these people started debating with Paul. (Acts 17:18)
4. Where did the Jews read the Law of Moses every Saturday? (Acts 15:21)
5. What did the philosophers call Paul when they heard him preach? (Acts 17:18)
7. This member of the Areopagus became a follower of Paul. (Acts 17:34)
8. This woman heard and believed the Good News when Paul preached in Athens. (Acts 17:34)
10. While staying in Corinth, Paul shared the Good News and tried to persuade Jews and _____ every Sabbath. (Acts 18:4)
11. This is the city where Paul saw an altar with the inscription "TO AN UNKNOWN GOD." (Acts 17:22-23)
13. Paul quoted Greek _____ while preaching at the Areopagus. (Acts 17:28)

For answers see page 31

Illustrated by Inna KOZINA



QUESTIONS and ANSWERS



WHO

WHAT

When

Why

How

Where

Who

What

When

Why

How

Where

1. Why is Easter celebrated at different times? (Dima, 12 years old, Russia)

Easter celebrates Jesus Christ's resurrection. For Christians, it's a very special and joyful holiday. The Friday before Easter is a time for remembering the death of Jesus Christ – how he was crucified and died for the sins of the whole world. Some people fast on this day, which means they don't eat or drink anything. Instead of focusing on food, they use this time to look closely at their lives and confess their sins. Then, on Sunday, they celebrate the fact that Jesus Christ rose from the dead and is alive!

The early Christians used to celebrate this once a week. Since Christ's death and resurrection occurred around the Jewish holiday of Passover, Christians had a very special celebration once a year during this time. On Passover, Jews remembered how God brought His people out of Egypt. They celebrated Passover on the 14th day of Nissan, which occurred in the spring. The Jewish calendar is a lunar calendar. Since a new month started with each new moon, the 14th day of Nissan wasn't on the same day each year. In time, Christians came to celebrate this holiday on the Sunday that follows the first full moon after the vernal equinox. The vernal equinox is in the spring, on the 20th of March, but the first full moon happens between the 20th of March and the 18th of April. Since the day of the first full moon changes, the date when Easter is celebrated also changes from year to year.

2. How will the dead come back to life if their bodies have already rotted? (Ira, 10 years old, Russia)

The Bible answers this question when the Apostle Paul writes about the resurrection of the dead and says, "But someone will ask, 'How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?' How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body... There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another" (1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 40).

Since nothing is impossible for God, raising a person from the dead is not a problem. Every spring He creates new life out of the seeds that die in the ground. Jesus Himself said, "Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds" (John 12:24).

Answers by Waldemar ZORN



A Lesson in the Park

Jake and Grandma are going for a walk in the park. The park is a great place to visit because there are so many interesting things to see.

Look, there's a lizard on the path! And that bird in the bushes is making lots of noise. Here is a wild apple tree.



Jake is having a great time. He's running around looking at the trees, bushes and flowers God created.

"Grandma! Grandma! Did God make the grass?"

"Yes, Jake. God made the grass."



"Did God make the flowers?"

"Yes, Jake. God made the flowers, too."

"And the trees? Did God make the trees?"

"Yes, Jake."



"Grandma, I see a nest in the tree and there's something in the nest."



"Grandma, why did God make trees?"
Walking up to a big tree, Grandma said, "Look closely and see if you can figure out some reasons why God gave us trees."



"You're right. Those are baby birds. Watch the starling with the worm in its mouth. It's going to feed the baby birds. If that nest was on the ground, what might happen to it?"

Jake stopped to think about it. "Someone might step on it and crush the baby birds," he said, "or a dog might come and eat them."



"Yes, when God created trees, He gave birds places to build their homes and find shelter from the rain. Try to think of another reason. Do you remember going camping and roasting marshmallows? What did you use to build a campfire?"

"Wood!" Jake shouted. "And wood comes from trees!"

"That's right! People burn wood to cook food and to stay warm. Those are also good reasons why we need trees."

"Grandma, that bird over there is trying to eat the little apple on the apple tree."



"You've found another reason we need trees! People, birds, and other animals eat fruit that comes from different trees. God planned for trees to give us fruit to eat. Did you know that paper is also made from trees? People can use this paper to print books."



"Grandma, all this thinking is making me tired!"
"Okay, why don't you sit down and rest for a little bit."



Jake plopped down on the grass and smiled as he leaned back against the trunk of the tree. Grandma smiled. "God made trees like this one so you could rest in the shade. God knows what we need and He takes care of us. God knows everything, He sees everything, He's the

Jake knew of a very special book. "People use trees to make paper and print books like the Bible?"

"Yes, books like the Bible," Grandma agreed. "Trees are also needed for building houses, furniture, and boats. Many, many things are made from wood."

wisest, and He loves us very much. God wants us to love Him and to share His love with others. We need to always think about nice things we can do for God and how we can make Him happy."



Suddenly Jake jumped up and grabbed Grandma's hand. "I think we need to go home right now. Mom and Dad need to know about this!"

"That's a great idea," Grandma agreed. She and Jake held hands and they walked out of the park.



Johann Sebastian Bach

1685–1750

“All of my music belongs to God...”



“It’s raining again,” she said while closing the window that looked out onto the garden. Out there, flowers bowed beneath the weight of the water that clung to their petals. The branches of the apple tree also drooped and hung down toward the ground. “Why are you smiling?”

“It’s the music again. Do you hear the symphony? Oh, if only my eyesight would return. Then I could write the music that rings in my soul without bothering you.”

“Don’t worry, you know how much I like working with you. Let me take out some paper.”

He walked over to the instrument and touched the cool, smooth ivories. After a momentary pause, his fingers began to dance over the black and white keys. She brought the chair closer and, picking up

a notebook of music paper, began to write – drawing in little black notes like beads on a string.

Against the backdrop of the rain-splattered window, two bowed figures sat next to each other – Johann Sebastian Bach and his wife, Anna Magdalena.

Childhood

In those days, the name Bach had the same meaning as the word “musician” for people in Germany. Members of the Bach family were violinists and organists. They skillfully played flutes and trumpets. Their children were taught music from an early age. Johann Sebastian Bach was born in 1685 in Eisenach, a small town not far from the famous Wartburg Castle, where the great reformer

Martin Luther had worked on translating the Bible into German. This happened 160 years before Johann’s birth. Johann’s father, a city musician, taught his son to play the violin. The boy also had a good voice and sang in the school choir. His future was certain – of course he would be a musician! Johann became an orphan when he was about ten years old and his older brother, who lived in the city of Ohrdruf, took him in.

Johann and his brother

One bright, clear night a curious moon peeked in through the window as though to see what held the young boy’s attention at such a late hour. The

boy knelt beside the windowsill and carefully copied down music notes into a small notebook. Suddenly, the door swung open. The light of a candle lit the room and a loud shout shattered the silence.

“What are you doing here?”

“I... I’m just writing...”

“Who gave you permission to take my music? How did you open this cabinet?”

The older brother was very angry. He snatched his collection of music out of the boy’s hands. This music was written by popular artists and he was supposed to guard it carefully. He also took the boy’s notebook. Six months of working on that notebook in the middle of the night had hurt Johann’s eyes, and now he had nothing to show for it.

“Fine, then I’ll write my own music!” Johann shouted. “It’ll be even better.”

“Go to bed!”

In time, the young boy did just what he said he would do.

Creative Works

Johann’s relationship with his brother did not improve and, when he was fifteen years old, he moved out on his own. He had already graduated from high school and could have gone to a university, but he needed to earn money and make a living. He moved to the city of Luneburg. In the years that followed, he often moved from one city to another in search of the best place for composing music. Johann directed all of his energy toward music – music and God.

At the height of his creativity, he wrote the St. John Passion, the St. Matthew Passion, and the Mass in B minor. Here, the term “passion” means the suffering and death of Jesus Christ, which was described by apostles like John and Matthew. Mass in B minor also follows a similar theme. These works are performed with soloists, a choir, an orchestra and the organ. In the St. Matthew Passion, the aria called Peter’s Denial is especially moving. It follows the apostle Peter as he repents, weeps bitterly, and cries out for mercy after denying Christ three times. The musical phrases seem to sigh as they follow one another, sobbing and lamenting along with Peter. Through the music, listeners experience the emotions of sinners who find hope

and comfort in praying for forgiveness. Themes of grief and compassion are often found in Bach’s works and echo throughout nearly all of his religious pieces.

A Musical Legacy

All of the composer’s works combine amazing depth and rich content. Bach wrote pieces of music for the organ and harpsichord, spent a lot of time and energy teaching, took part in city concerts, and created vocal and instrumental music for his family, which was especially musical. He wrote sonatas



Front page of the personal Bible of Johann Sebastian Bach

and suites, concerts and fugues, masses and oratorios, preludes and toccatas, fantasias and improvisations. The musical legacy he left includes over one thousand works!

Johann Sebastian Bach’s great grandfather, grandfather, father, uncle, brothers, all of his sons, his grandson and even his great grandson were musicians. Anna Magdalena, his wife and invaluable helper, also had a wonderful ear for music and a rich, strong voice.

The great composer died in 1750. At the end of his life, Bach said, “All of my music belongs to God and all of my abilities are meant to serve Him.”

Nadezhda ORLOVA

Created by Elvira ZORN

WHICH ANSWER IS RIGHT?

Find the answer!

1. IN WHICH DESERT DID JOHN THE BAPTIST PREACH?

- a) Desert of Sinai
- b) Desert of Ziph
- c) Desert of Judea

2. JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES WERE IN THIS PLACE WHEN HE FED 4000 PEOPLE.

- a) Near the Sea of Galilee
- b) By the Jordan
- c) In Jericho

3. HOW MANY YEARS DID THE ISRAELITES SPEND WANDERING IN THE DESERT AFTER LEAVING EGYPT?

- a) 30 years
- b) 38 years
- c) 40 years

4. WHO WANDERED IN THE DESERT?

- a) Elisha
- b) Hagar
- c) Lot

5. WHOM DID SATAN TEMPT IN THE DESERT?

- a) John the Baptist
- b) Jesus Christ
- c) Phillip

6. THE BIBLE TALKS ABOUT AN APOSTLE WHO WAS IN DANGER IN THE COUNTRY. WHAT IS HIS NAME?

- a) Peter
- b) Paul
- c) John

7. WHO WAS HERDING GOATS IN THE DESERT WHEN GOD APPEARED TO HIM IN A BURNING BUSH?

- a) Abel
- b) Abraham
- c) Moses

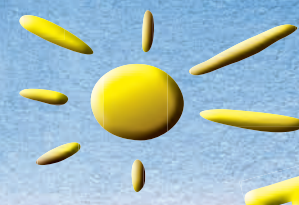
8. WHO WAS THROWN INTO A WELL BY HIS BROTHERS WHEN HE WAS IN THE DESERT?

- a) Joseph
- b) Absalom
- c) David

9. AARON THE PRIEST WAS SUPPOSED TO PUT THE SINS OF ISRAEL ON WHICH ANIMAL SO THAT IT COULD CARRY THEM INTO THE DESERT?

- a) Goat
- b) Sheep
- c) Lamb

Illustrated by Victoria DUNAYEVA



The desert of Shur

Elvira ZORN

Bible Geography

"Mom, here's a question for you," David said as he walked into the kitchen where his mother was cooking dinner. "Do you know the name of the desert the Israelites passed through at the very beginning of their journey from Egypt?"

"Oh, I'm not sure," his mother replied. "I know they received the Ten Commandments when they were in the Sinai desert, but I don't remember the other desert."

"It was the Desert of Shur," David announced. "I used to think the Israelites spent all their time wandering through one big desert, but my Sunday School teacher told us their journey actually involved several deserts. She said after the Israelites left Succoth they came to the oasis at Etham, which was at the edge of the desert. Then God then told them to turn toward the Red Sea. After they crossed

this sea on dry ground, they walked through the wilderness, which is part of the Desert of Shur. For three days, the Israel-



ites wandered in this desert without finding any water. Finally, they came to the oasis at Marah and camped there, but they were upset because the water at Marah was bitter. God had Moses throw a piece of wood into the water and after that it didn't taste bad.

Want to know what else happened in the Desert of Shur? Many years before the Israelites got there, the Angel of the LORD appeared to Hagar in this desert after she ran away from her mistress, Sarah. And, for a while, Abraham lived between Kadesh and Shur.

"I wanted to learn more, so I looked up 'Desert of Shur' on the internet, but most of the information I found just repeated what the Bible said about this desert. I did learn that the Desert of Shur is a rocky desert in the northwestern part of the Sinai Peninsula, between Israel and the eastern boarder of Egypt. I couldn't find any other information."

"Thank you, David," Mother said. "You've given me a much better understanding of the area the Israelites passed through after leaving Egypt. How about you go learn more about those other deserts the Israelites traveled through during their 40 years in the wilderness?"

Illustrated by Julia PRAVDOHINA



2. The first steps

Stories from the History of Christianity



For example, one young Pharisee from Jerusalem, named Saul, went to Damascus, the capital of Syria, to find the Christians living there and throw them in prison. He was not far from Damascus when he heard the voice of Jesus saying, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" Saul fell to the ground. The bright light he saw blinded him. The men traveling with Saul led him to Damascus. There, he finally believed, was baptized, and became a fearless preacher of the gospel. He even changed his name and started calling himself Paul, which means small or humble.

The road leading from Jerusalem to Damascus



If you have a little brother or sister, you know what the phrase "first steps" means. The little one's first steps are shaky and unsure, but Dad holds on to her and keeps her from falling. The same was true for Christianity. Around 30 to 33 A.D. the disciples of Jesus Christ started preaching about Jesus in Jerusalem, the capital of Judea. They told others that Jesus is the Messiah, God in the flesh. God gave these Christians the power to heal and perform miracles – that's how He held their hand as they took their very first steps. The miracles also helped them know He was with them.

Within several years, the religious Jews who did not believe in Jesus started stirring up trouble for the Christians. That's when many Christians left Judea and spread to other cities of the great Roman Empire. Of course, the enemies of Christ didn't let that stop them. They tried to get the Christians wherever they were and say bad things about them or even kill them.



Illustrated by Alexander BASS

In those years, all of the apostles and early followers of Jesus Christ left Jerusalem because of persecution. They spread out and settled in other cities and towns throughout the Roman Empire. All of them had a similar Jewish background so when they came to a new city they looked for other Jews who would help them. When the Jews met together in the synagogue on Saturday, these Christians would tell them about Jesus and use the scriptures to show that He was the Messiah promised by God. Hearing this, some believed and were baptized in Jesus' name, but most of the Jews saw Jesus as a liar and forced the Christians to leave. After that, Christians began telling the local people around them about Jesus Christ.

In those days, every city and even every family had its own god. These local people were pagans, but they were very religious. They believed idols could help them, so they prayed and offered sacrifices to the idols. Christians explained that Jesus was the one, true God and many pagans became followers of Christ. This made the Jews who did not believe in Jesus even angrier and they drove the Christians out. As a result, Christians couldn't go to the synagogue and had to meet separately. That's how the first Christian communities started. From the very beginning, these communities were not ruled by the Jewish authorities. The number of local people in these Christian communities kept growing. They got together in the evenings after work, ate together, and met to worship God by praying, singing, and studying the scriptures on the first day of the week. This first day of the week was the day when most people rested in the Roman Empire.

Many Christians felt God's call to go to different cities and tell others about Jesus. That's why Paul, formerly called Saul, traveled a lot and started Christian communities in 50-60 A.D. Most of the people in these new communities had once been pagans. These people were called Gentiles. That's why Paul is known as the apostle to the Gentiles. Soon there were so many Christian communities that he, and the other apostles who had seen and heard Jesus Christ, couldn't visit them all. That's why they started writing letters in which they talked about believing in Jesus Christ and living as a Christian.

Some of the oldest known pictures of the Apostles Peter and Paul, which were found in the Roman catacombs



In the second half of the first century, Christians understood that they were not a different branch of the Jewish religion but a completely separate movement. They did not have to follow all the Jewish laws and could go directly to God through Jesus Christ. They completely broke away from Judaism and began to build their life on the principles taught by their Teacher.

WHO AM I?

Hey there! What's up? I know that's not a fancy way of saying "hello," but that's okay because we already know each other! You see, we've been friends for a long time. What, you don't believe me? Just give me a chance to tell you a little more and you'll see what I mean.

Want me to describe myself? That's easy, there are lots of us and we come in many different kinds. What kinds? Well, there are Syrian, Dwarf, and Chinese – just to name a few! Those are just some of my relatives. And me? I'm not any of them, I'm the ordinary kind!

I belong to the rodent family. I have short paws, a short tail, and little ears. My body is almost 15 inches long and that includes my tail. Some of my relatives are even smaller, only 2.5 inches in length. I weigh about 1.3 pounds. When it comes to food, I eat all sorts of things like seeds, fruit, leafy green plants, roots, insects, and even other small rodents. I carry food in my cheek pouches and I'll tell you right now that I can fit a lot in there! Seventy pieces of grain, no problem; they'll fit! I empty these sacs and take the food out by pushing on my cheeks with my front paws. Oh, I forgot to mention that I know how to swim. I fill my cheek pouches with air and they help me float. It's kind of like using an inflatable raft or an inner tube.

I store food for the winter in my burrow. My favorite foods are grains and potatoes. I choose the best seeds, sort them, and store each kind in a different

Olga MARTYNOVA

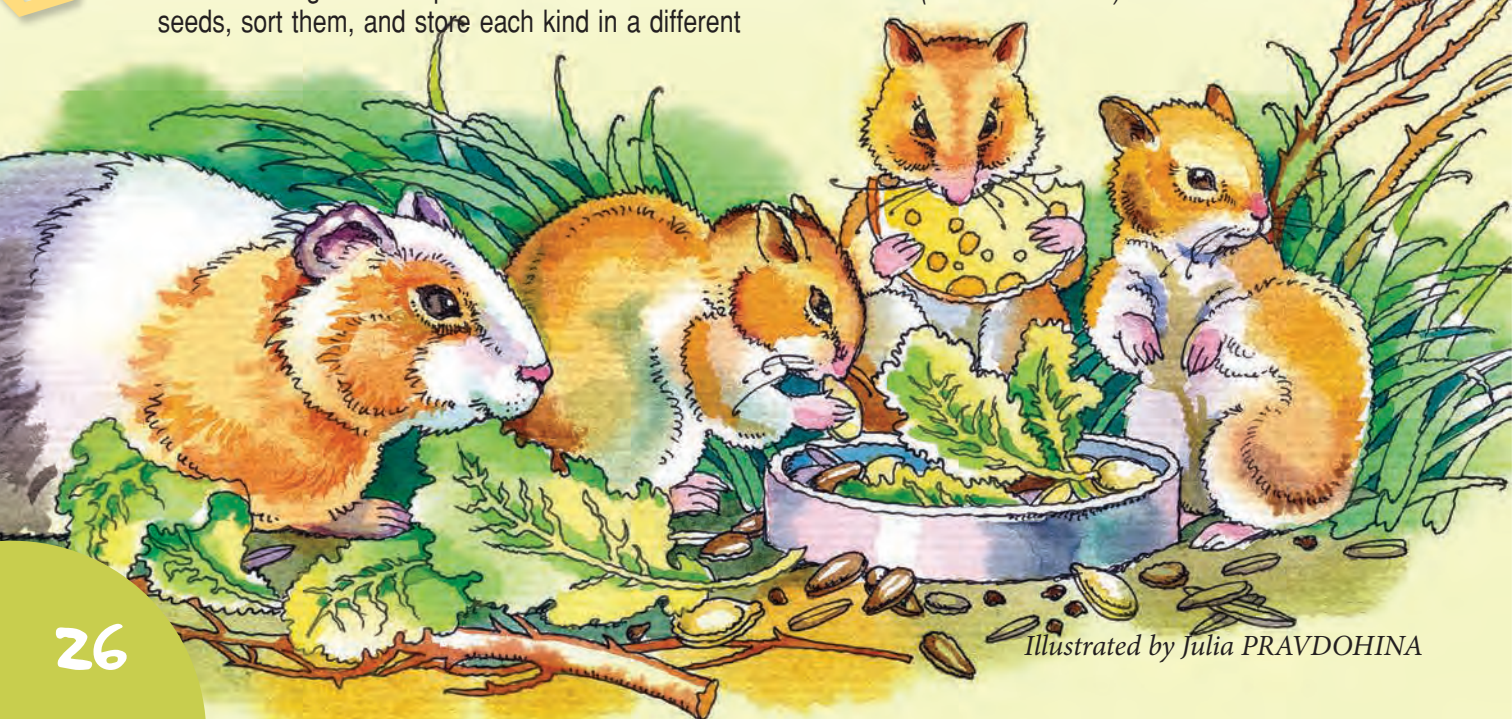
place. In my burrow you might find up to 44 pounds of grain. Once, when people uncovered the burrow of one of my relatives, they found almost 200 pounds of food stored up for the winter!

I live by myself in a deep maze of burrows. A normal summer burrow has 2 or 3 horizontal tunnels (some might have up to 10 of these tunnels) and one vertical one. We hibernate during the winter, but wake up once the weather starts to get warmer.

We're very brave. Dogs and even people don't scare us. We get up on our hind feet, click our teeth and, if we have to, we bite hard.

I want to tell you a little bit about my Syrian cousin. You know him quite well. In fact, he's not wild at all, but scientists only discovered him in 1839. During an expedition to Syria, the scientist Israel Aharoni found the burrow of this rodent. At the very bottom of the 8-foot deep burrow he discovered a female with 12 of her young. From one male and three females, this scientist got 150 offspring in one year. Today, the hands of children and their parents pet millions of these golden little animals. All of them are the offspring of the three females found by Aharoni!

It's finally time for me to introduce myself, but I know you've already figured out that I'm a **hamster** (*Cricetus cricetus*)!



Illustrated by Julia PRAVDOHINA



1
Horseshoe crabs are small arthropods that live in tropical and temperate regions. They are found in large puddles and when the puddles dry up they die. However, their eggs have a thick shell and can survive in the dried mud for many years. When it finally rains, new horseshoe crabs hatch from the eggs.



2
A **Desert quail** nest looks like a hole in the sand. From above, the eggs and chicks look like stones because of their coloring. This makes it harder for birds of prey to spot them.

Illustrated by Julia PRAVDOHINA



Did you know?

3

Earwigs are insects with six legs and pincers on the end of their body, but they don't behave like other insects. After laying the eggs, the mother collects them and makes a pile. She also cleans them and protects them from invaders. Once the eggs hatch, she continues to protect the larvae until they grow up and are ready to live on their own.



4

Found in India, Indonesia, Australia, South America and southern Africa, **Jacanas** are birds that live in shallow lakes and have large feet with long, widespread toes. That means this bird can spread its weight over a large area and not fall into the water as it walks on the plants floating at the surface!



5

Capybaras live in South America. These rodents look like guinea pigs but they're over 4 feet long and weigh up to 140 pounds! Capybaras are good swimmers – their webbed feet help them escape from danger in the water.



Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made a golden statue. When the music played at its dedication, everyone was supposed to bow and worship the statue. Whoever did not bow would be thrown into the fiery furnace. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego — captives from Judea who only worshipped the living God — refused to obey the king's command. Number the pictures to show the order in which the events of the story happened.

The king's command



Illustrated by Larisa GOROSKO

Read the third chapter of Daniel to figure out if your pictures are in the right order.



COLLAGE THE DEER

CRAFT CORNER



You will need an 8 x 6 inch piece of cardboard. Glue a piece of yarn to the back of the cardboard so you can hang up your collage when it is finished.



1. Cut out parts 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Glue them to the cardboard in that order. (See miniature sample at the bottom.)
2. Glue the body of the deer (part 6) to part 2.
3. Glue on the white chest (part 11a and 11b).
4. Glue on the head (part 7).
5. Glue the pink parts (9a and 9b) to the ears.
6. Glue on the tail (part 8a).
7. Glue part 8b to the tail.
8. Glue the eye (part 10) to the head.
9. Spread the pieces for 12 along the back of the deer.
10. Glue part 14 to part 5.
11. Glue the mushroom stems (part 15) next to the stump but don't glue the top of the stems until you slide the mushroom cap (part 16) underneath and glue it in place.
12. Glue part 13 to part 4.
13. Now use a marker to write the Bible verse (Psalm 42:1) on part 1.



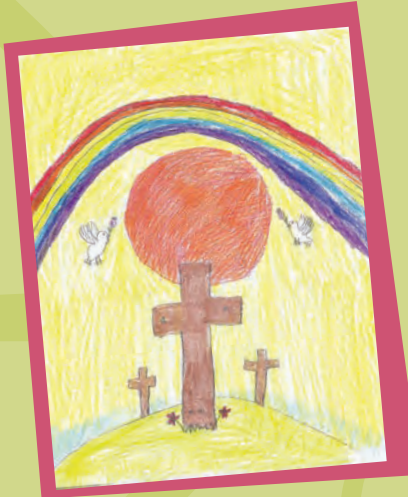
Created and Illustrated by Julia ILCHUK



Sasha HAITOV, 6 years old, Israel



Dominique, 3 years old, Germany



Emily Bondar, 10 years old, USA



Vitalik KOPITUK, 7 years old, USA



Vasil ONISCHUK, Ukraine



Annie Bondar, 7 years old, USA



Katya TARANCHENKO Kate, 8 years old, Ukraine



Lira ROMARNUK, 11 years old, Moldova



Ekaterina KOLOMEYETS, Ukraine



GOD IS LOVE



There once was a boy named Victor.
 "Mama, who is God?" Victor asked his mother.
 "Come here, son." His mother picked him up and placed him in her lap. Then she said, "God is good. He loves children and grown-ups. He loves animals, bugs, and birds. God loves you too, son."
 "Mama, does God like when people tell Him 'Thank you' for breakfast, lunch, and dinner?"
 "Of course!"
 "What does God think when people swear and say bad words?" asked the boy.
 "God says that is a great sin," answered his mother.
 "Then I will never swear or say bad words. Tell me Mama, does God love daisies, roses, and dandelions?"
 "Yes, son."
 "Does God love bad people?"
 "He loves both bad and good people," Mother said.
 "Thank you Mama! I love you so much!"

Igor SENATRUSOV



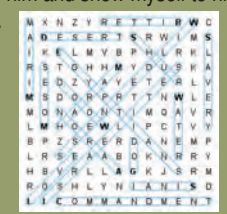
Olena STASUK, 12 years old, Ukraine

Dear Tropinka, I love your magazine. It's the best ever. I love the verses. Every time, I read that verse, I memorize it and say it at church! I love the stories too! Thanks for reading my letter! Here is a Bible verse:
 "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God" (1 John 3:1).
 Could you, please, write me back? It's okay, if not.

Yana SIVERINA, USA

Answers

- Page 2: "BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD" (Psalm 46:10).
- Page 9: RUNNER: "But seventy-seven times" (Matthew 18:22).
 READ THE VERSE: "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him" (John 14:21).
- Page 15: WORDSEARCH.
- Page 16: CROSSWORD: ACROSS: 1. Repent 3. Idols 6. Areopagus 9. Paul 12. Resurrection 14. Unknown 15. Jews 16. Thessalonica
 DOWN: 2. Philosophers 4. Synagogue 5. Babbler 7. Dionysius 8. Damaris 10. Greeks 11. Athens 13. Poets.
- Page 22: 1-c (Matthew 3:1), 2-a (Matthew 15:32-39), 3-c (Acts 13:17-18), 4-b (Genesis 21:14), 5-b (Matthew 4:1), 6-b (2 Corinthians 11:26), 7-c (Exodus 3:1-4), 8-a (Genesis 37:19-24), 9-a (Leviticus 16:20-22).



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For elementary and middle school age children.





Alena MAKSiMCHUK,
15 years old, Ukraine



Anna OSADCHAYA,
14 years old, Ukraine



Anastasia AKIMOVA,
14 years old, Ukraine



Dmitro UDODIK,
11 years old, Ukraine



Luda ROMANUK,
14 years old, Ukraine

*Dear Readers,
From the bottom of our hearts
we want to wish you a Happy Easter!*

**CHRIST IS RISEN!
HE IS RISEN INDEED!**

Tropinka's Editors



Elina KOZLOVA, 9 years old,
Russia



Elena ZOHIRKA,
16 years old, Moldova



Vova DIDOVETS,
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