

# TEMPTATION (The Season of Lent)

**Scripture Reading: Matthew 4:1-11**

*Opportunity may knock only once, but temptation leans on the doorbell! — Anon.*

The subject for today is *temptation*. It's appropriate because on the First Sunday in Lent the Scripture lesson is about how Jesus handles temptation.

You might think that when you reach a certain age — a particular level of maturity — that temptation is no longer a major problem. We've probably learned how to recognize temptation and resist it.

But wait! A very common temptation is *to pass judgment too quickly* — to come to conclusions before all the facts are in. Consider this example:

Juliet Riley was at Boston Logan airport waiting for her connecting flight to Dublin. She faced several hours before departure, so she bought a book and a bag of cookies and found a place to rest. She started to read her book — a Stephen King mystery.

It was not long after she started to read, that she noticed that the man sitting by her on the bench had grabbed a cookie or two from her bag which she had placed in between them.

She was sort of shocked, but decided to say nothing so as to avoid making a scene.

So Juliet munched on her cookies and watched the clock, as the gutsy cookie thief continued to diminish her stock. Although she was a good Christian lady, she was getting more irritated by the minute, and once she wickedly thought that if she wasn't so nice, she'd slap his hand the next time it hovered over the cookie bag. With each cookie she took, he took one, too.

When only one was left, she wondered what he would do. With a smile on his face, and a nervous laugh, he took the last cookie and broke it in half. He offered her half as he ate the other. She snatched it from him and thought, "Wow! This guy has some nerve and he's also rude. He doesn't even show any gratitude!" It had been a long time since she'd been so upset, and so she was relieved when her flight was called. She gathered her belongings and headed to the gate, refusing to look back at the thieving ingrate.

Juliet boarded the plane and sank in her seat. Then she sought her book, reaching into her luggage. As she did so, she gasped with surprise. There in front of her astonished eyes was *her* bag of cookies. If *mine* are here, she moaned in despair, the others were *his*, and he tried to share. Too late to apologize, she realized with grief that she was the rude one, the ingrate and the thief!

*Prayer: Help me, Lord, to be patient and slow to judge the motives of other people. Amen.*

# ACTIVITY PAGE – TEMPTATION

## Verse to Remember

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.” — Psalm 23:1

## Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** Leviticus 1-4
- Monday:** Leviticus 5-7
- Tuesday:** Leviticus 8-10
- Wednesday:** Leviticus 11-13
- Thursday:** Leviticus 14-16
- Friday:** Leviticus 17-19
- Saturday:** Psalms 22-24

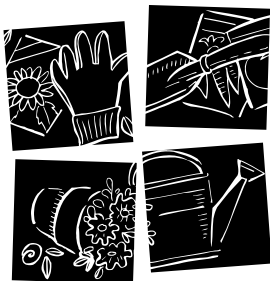


## Think Spring!

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

This is the time of the year when snow is melting and rain begins to fall. Find the following forms of water in the word search puzzle to the left:

- |               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| cloud         | reservoir    |
| dew           | river        |
| fog           | sleet        |
| frost         | snow         |
| geyser        | spring       |
| glacier       | steam        |
| hail          | vapor        |
| humidity      | waterfall    |
| hydrate       | ice          |
| iceberg       | lake         |
| ocean         | perspiration |
| rain          |              |
| artesian well |              |



### Brain Stumpers:

1. What gets wetter and wetter the more it dries?
2. What can you catch but not throw?
3. What's black and white and red all over?

**Brain Stumpers:**  
1. A towel  
2. A cold  
3. A newspaper

# APPRECIATING (The Season of Lent)

## Scripture Reading: Exodus 17:1-7

*We humans spend too much time thinking about the past, complaining about the present and fearing the future! —Antoine Rivarol*

It is the season of Lent, and I have been writing about character traits. Today, the focus is on the problem of *complaining*.

Wise men and philosophers throughout the ages have disagreed on many things, but many are in unanimous agreement on one point: “We become what we think about,” Ralph Waldo Emerson said. “You are what you think about all day long.” The Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius put it this way: “Your life is what your thoughts make of it.” In the Bible we find, “As a man thinks in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7).

One Sunday afternoon, a cranky grandfather was visiting his family. As he lay down to take a nap, his grandson decided to have a little fun by putting Limburger cheese on grandfather’s mustache.

Soon, grandpa awoke with a snort and charged out of the bedroom saying, “This room stinks.” Through the house he went, finding every room smelling the same. Desperately he made his way outside only to find that “The whole world stinks!”

This is a silly story, but it sort of illustrates what happens when we fill our minds with negativism. Everything we experience and everybody we encounter will carry the scent we hold in our mind.

I remember a conversation when my wife and I first visited the beautiful Oregon coast. We were talking with a man who lived in a certain neighborhood not far from Newport. My wife mentioned that it must be wonderful to live so close to the ocean and the beach.

“I never go to the beach,” he said.

“You’re kidding,” I said. “This stretch of coastline is amazing!”

“I used to,” he said, “But you get tired of seeing it every day and soon it’s no big deal.”

I think that’s the way we sometimes treat the blessings that God sends our way. Someone once wrote,

*When we see the same blessings every day, we eventually stop noticing them.*

*When we stop noticing, we quit appreciating.*

*When we quit appreciating, we stop thanking.*

*When we stop thanking, we start complaining.*

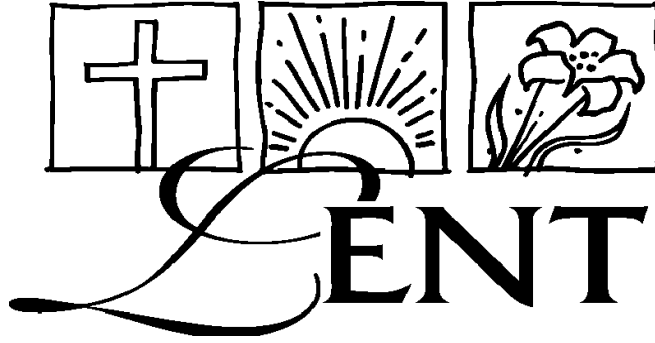
—Timothy Merrill

*Prayer: O God, help me to see the wonders of your blessings in a new way. Amen.*

# ACTIVITY PAGE – APPRECIATING

## Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** Mark 14-16  
**Monday:** Numbers 1-3  
**Tuesday:** Numbers 4-6  
**Wednesday:** Numbers 7-10  
**Thursday:** Numbers 11-14  
**Friday:** Numbers 15-17  
**Saturday:** Psalms 29-30



## WORD SEARCH

Today is the Third Sunday of Lent. Find the words below that are all associated with the Lenten journey toward the cross.

- |         |             |            |         |        |        |
|---------|-------------|------------|---------|--------|--------|
| crown   | donkey      | hosanna    | penance | Pilate | sins   |
| colt    | crucifixion | forsaken   | kiss    | prayer | suffer |
| confess | death       | Gethsemane | lots    | repent | thorns |
| cross   | denial      | Golgotha   | palms   | silver | vigil  |



## Word Picture

What expression comes to mind when you study this drawing?

Write your answer below.



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Word Picture:** Jack in the box.

# HOSANNA! (Palm Sunday)

**Scripture Reading: Matthew 26:14–27:66**

*The birth of Christ brought God to humanity;  
the death of Christ brought humanity to God. —Anon.*

*Hosanna, loud hosanna, the little children sang; through pillared court and temple, the lovely anthem rang.  
To Jesus, who had blessed them, close folded to his breast, the children sang their praises,  
the simplest and the best. —Jennette Threlfall (1821-1880).*

Today is Palm Sunday. No doubt children were indeed singing — as verse 1 of the hymn “Hosanna, Loud Hosanna” suggests. The little children sang! And why not? Jesus loved children. He didn’t mind that they were loud and noisy sometimes. He did not mind if they cried or fussed. I am certain that children were drawn to Jesus as iron to a magnet.

Today was no different. They waved palm branches; they danced and cavorted around the tiny donkey on which Jesus was riding, singing all the time. It was a carefree and joyful time. Jesus, of the lineage of David, was making a rare appearance in Jerusalem.

Yes, it was rare. In fact, it was remarkable. Jesus was in Jerusalem knowing that it was here that he would die. Some people might think of Jesus as a wimp. But if you read the gospels, you know that rather than wait for his enemies to find him and drag him to Jerusalem, Jesus preempted such an action by going there first.

So here he is. As he told his disciples, no one would take his life from him. He was *voluntarily* laying it down. It is a critical distinction. Had Jesus waited for his enemies to capture him, it would weaken his claim to be our Savior. People would say that he was just putting the best possible spin on the worst possible outcome.

No, Jesus gave himself for us — *freely!* And Palm Sunday made sure of it. He rode as a king into a dark network of betrayal and hostility. Jesus understood completely what was going to happen.

*“Hosanna in the highest!” That ancient song we sing, for Christ is our Redeemer, the Lord of heaven, our King.  
O may we ever praise him with heart and life and voice, and in his blissful presence eternally rejoice.  
—Jennette Threlfall (1821-1880).*

*Prayer: O God, on this Palm Sunday, we shout “Hosanna” as we acknowledge the King of Kings! We are full of praise because Jesus did not flinch, but “set his face toward Jerusalem” where he knew he would lay down his life. We thank you for this gift of supreme love. It is in the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.*

# ACTIVITY PAGE – HOSANNA!

## Daily Bible Readings

**Sunday:** Luke 1-4

**Monday:** Deuteronomy 23-25

**Tuesday:** Deuteronomy 26-28

**Wednesday:** Deuteronomy 29-31

**Thursday:** Deuteronomy 32-34

**Friday:** Joshua 1-7

**Saturday:** Psalms 33-35

## RIDDLE

A father is 62 when his daughter is 36. How many years has it been since she was exactly one-third his age?

(answer below)

WRITE THE PROMISE ISRAEL  
MADE TO JOSHUA HERE:

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## The Promise

Find the missing letter in each row and write it in the space provided. Then read from top to bottom to hear Israel's promise to Joshua (See Joshua 24:24 [NIV]).

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZYXWVUTSRQPONMLKJIHGFDCBA \_\_\_\_\_  
 ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZYXWVUTSRQPONMLKJIHGFDCBA \_\_\_\_\_  
 ABCDEFGHIJKMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZYXWVUTSRQPONMKJIHGFDCBA \_\_\_\_\_  
 ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRTUVWXYZ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZYXWVUTSRQPONMLKJIHGFDCBA \_\_\_\_\_  
 ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQSTUVWXYZ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZYXWUTSRQPONMLKJIHGFDCBA \_\_\_\_\_  
 ABCDFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZYXWVUSRQPONMLKJIHGFDCBA \_\_\_\_\_  
 ABCDEFGIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZYXWVUTSRQPONMLKJIHGFDCBA \_\_\_\_\_  
 ABCDEFGHIJKMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZYXWVUTSRQPNMLKJIHGFDCBA \_\_\_\_\_  
 ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQSTUVWXYZ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZYXWVUTSRQPONMLKJIHGFECBA \_\_\_\_\_  
 BCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZYXWVUTSRQPOMLKJIHGFDCBA \_\_\_\_\_  
 ABCEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZYXWVUTSRQPNMLKJIHGFDCBA \_\_\_\_\_  
 ACDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZYXWVUTSRQPONMLKJIHGFDCBA \_\_\_\_\_  
 ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZYXWVUTSRQPONMLKJIGFDCBA \_\_\_\_\_  
 ABCDEFGHJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZYXWVUTSRQPONLKJIHGFDCBA \_\_\_\_\_

Riddle: 23.  
She was  
13, he was  
39.



# HE IS RISEN! (Easter Sunday)

**Scripture Reading: Matthew 28:1-10**

*Our old history ends with the cross;  
our new history begins with the resurrection. —Anon.*

Today is Easter Sunday, and if you were asked what Easter is all about, you probably would have an answer.

A certain Sunday school teacher was not so sure that her students understood the meaning of Easter. So, on Easter Sunday morning, she asked the children if they knew what happened on Easter and why it was so important.

One little girl spoke up saying: “Easter is when the whole family gets together, and you eat turkey and sing about the pilgrims and all that.”

“Um, no, that’s not Easter; that’s Thanksgiving Day,” said the teacher.

“I know what Easter is,” a second student responded. “Easter is when you get a tree and decorate it and give gifts to everybody and sing lots of songs.”

“Nope, that’s not it either,” replied the teacher. “You’re thinking of Christmas.”

Finally, a third student spoke up, “Easter is when Jesus was killed, and put in a tomb and left for three days.” *Ah, thank goodness! At least one of my students understands what happened on Easter!* the teacher thought to herself.

But then the student went on to say, “Then everybody gathers at the tomb and waits to see if Jesus comes out, and if he sees his shadow he has to go back inside, and we have six more weeks of winter.”

Oh dear! Perhaps, the child did not understand after all! Do we understand Easter?

Here’s are a few things to remember about Easter:

1. The resurrection is a “guarantee” that the promises of God will be fulfilled.
2. The resurrection is a glimpse of our own future eternal state.
3. The resurrection makes possible our own new life in Christ.
4. The resurrection means that the victory of sin, death and the Devil is won.
5. The resurrection means that we have nothing to fear.
6. The resurrection means that Christ is alive. He is Risen!

This is a lot to get excited about! No wonder, Easter Sunday is the biggest, “huge-est,” most important, most sacred, and revered Sunday of the church year! Easter is the hinge-point of history. When Jesus was raised from the dead, *everything* changed! Thanks be to God!

—Timothy Merrill

*Prayer: Almighty, thank you for your power! The tomb is empty! He is risen! Amen.*

# ACTIVITY PAGE – HE IS RISEN!

## Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** Luke 5-9  
**Monday:** Joshua 8-16  
**Tuesday:** Joshua 17-24  
**Wednesday:** Judges 1-4  
**Thursday:** Judges 5-8  
**Friday:** Ruth 1-4  
**Saturday:** Psalms 36-39

## The Bible Code

If D=A and E=B, etc., decode this advice from Joshua 1:8 (NIV):

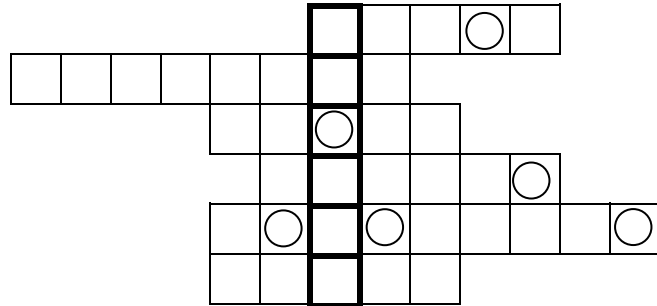
GR QRW OHW WKLW ERRN RI WKH ODZ GHSDUW IURP BRXU

PRXWK; PHGLWDWH RQ LW GDB DQG QLJKW.

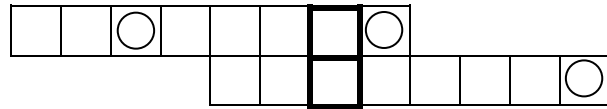
Write the Bible Code answer here: \_\_\_\_\_

## TODAY IS EASTER SUNDAY! Let Us Rejoice!

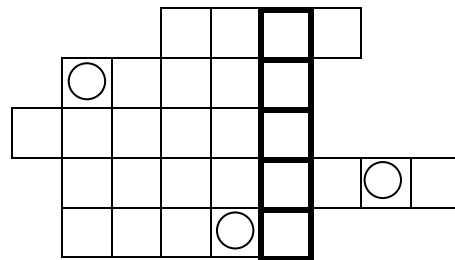
1. What Jesus was wrapped in
2. The site of the crucifixion
3. The king
4. He washed his hands of Jesus
5. Followers of Jesus
6. He denied Christ



7. A large hill
8. The feast celebrating escape from Egypt



9. Mother of Jesus
10. A teacher
11. The doubting disciple
12. Jesus was mistaken for this
13. One of Peter's names



Using the circled letters,  
unscramble the secret  
word:

\_\_\_\_\_



- Answers:**
1. cloth
  2. Golgotha
  3. Herod
  4. Pilate
  5. disciples
  6. Peter
  7. mountain
  8. Passover
  9. Mary
  10. rabbi
  11. Thomas
  12. gardener
  13. Simon
- Secret word:**  
resurrection