

Sunday, April 24, 2022

Scripture Reading: John 20:19-31

Smooth seas do not make skillful sailors. —African proverb

In the Bible we read that “every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain” (Isaiah 40:4). “The crooked shall be made straight.” This might be a reference to “rough places” or a crooked highway. Someday, the word of the Lord declares, what is crooked will be made straight.

We might all agree that this is a good thing. But what if there are times when it’s better to be crooked than straight? Is it possible?

Maybe.

In England, it is not uncommon to find crooked or curved walls in gardens and lawn areas rather than a straight wall. Known as *crinkle crankle* walls, or serpentine walls, they require fewer bricks than the straight ones! How is that possible?

A straight wall made on a single column of bricks topples over rather easily. That’s why a straight wall requires at least a double column of bricks. A curved, angled or crooked wall, on the other hand, requires only a single row of bricks. The crooked or curved construction makes the wall impervious to the forces that would topple a conventional straight wall.

What’s the point? We’re crooked people. No, not morally crooked, but crooked in the sense that we’ve been bent by the forces of experience, the winds of adversity and the storms of change. Yet, the outcome is that these forces have made us strong! We are strong in the crooked places; we are steadfast when all around us is falling; we are whole when so many others are incomplete.

The apostle Paul said that because of his trials and tribulation, “So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong” (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).

A curved and crooked wall might seem to be a weak one. But now, you and I know that it is a strong wall.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: O Lord, it is not easy to be thankful for the crooks, wrinkles, hardships and difficulties in one’s life, but I understand now, that they make me stronger. So now I can thank you for them. In your name. Amen.



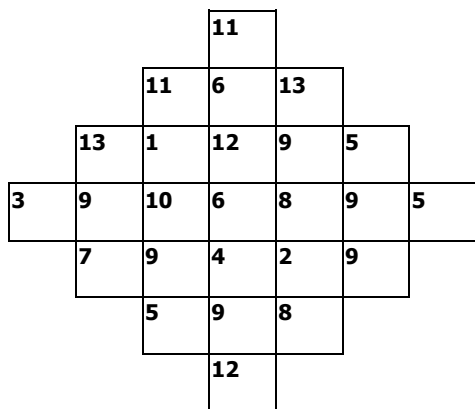
Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** Luke 10-13
- Monday:** Judges 13-15
- Tuesday:** Judges 16-18
- Wednesday:** Judges 19-21
- Thursday:** Ruth 1-4
- Friday:** 1 Samuel 1-3
- Saturday:** Psalms 40-42

NAME GAME

Some words that we use, such as these described below, come from the names of people. Identify the words and transfer the circled letters to the corresponding spaces in the diagram below to form a set of words in both directions.

1. A candy bar named after President Cleveland's daughter: B ○ _ _ _ _ _ .
2. A type of button-up sweater named after an English earl: C _ _ _ _ ○ _ _ _ _ .
3. A tight-fitting garment with long sleeves and a high neck that is worn by a dancer — named after a French trapeze artist: L _ _ _ _ _ _ ○ .
4. A Christmas flower named after a botanist: P _ _ _ ○ _ _ _ _ _ .
5. A type of engine named after its German inventor. Many pickup trucks use fuel with this same name: D _ _ _ ○ _ _ _ .
6. A method for sterilizing milk named after a French chemist: P _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ ○ _ .
7. A beef dish containing sour cream named after a Russian count: S _ _ _ _ _ ○ _ _ _ _ _ .
8. A unit of electrical power named after a Scottish inventor: W _ _ _ ○ _ .
9. A device found in amusement parks that consists of a huge wheel with seats on it is named after what American inventor? F ○ _ _ _ _ _ .
10. Denim trousers named after a German immigrant who participated in the California gold rush: L _ _ _ ○ _ ' _ .
11. A hoisting device used on oil wells named after an English hangman: D _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ ○ _ .
12. A type of thin, crisp toast named after an Australian opera star: M _ _ _ ○ _ _ _ .
13. A kind of driver used on a four-slotted screw named after its inventor: P _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ ○ _ .



Verse to Remember

I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry.

—Psalm 40:1



- ANSWERS:**
1. Baby Ruth
 2. Cardigan
 3. Leotard
 4. Poinsettia
 5. Diesel
 6. Pasteurization
 7. Stroganoff
 8. Watt
 9. Ferris
 10. Levi's
 11. Derrick
 12. Melba
 13. Phillips