

Life 'n' Living Booklets

By CQ

Water

Wood

Sky

Plants

Light

Mountains

Water

Water is amazing! Did you know that all the water that you use today has been around since the day of its creation?

You could be using water today that was once part of a lake in another country.

Maybe some of the particles of water that are in your swimming pool were once used in an ancient Roman bath! Who knows?

If we could see the history of what each little molecule of water you use today was once part of, and where it has been, I think it would be fascinating. There would be so many stories to tell!

Water is everywhere! Even rocks deep down inside the moon, when tested were found to contain water particles. Amazing!

Water is made up of oxygen and hydrogen. The funny thing is, that both those elements, when alone can be explosive and help to fuel fire. Yet when God combined them in just the right way to form water, it makes something that can put out fire! How about that!

Water can be seen in so many forms and shapes. It can be a liquid, or a solid—like ice. Or it can be a gas—water vapour, steam or clouds.

There are so many beautiful and amazing creations that are formed with water. God has a way of making the useful and necessary elements of life also beautiful.

If it weren't for water there wouldn't be...

beaches

waterfalls

coloured clouds at sunset

snowflakes

boat travel

sea creatures and coral reefs

lakes or ponds

rivers or streams

glaciers

tropical islands

geysers and hot springs

rainbows

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Water isn't just a decoration though; it's essential! We simply can't live without it. You see, our bodies are over half made of water. Did you know that? Water is very important to us!

What do you think happens when our body uses up some of that water for its daily functioning needs—and it's not replaced again through drinking nice, clean water?

Well, about the same thing that happens to a machine that isn't filled with the proper fuel and well oiled. It simple won't work right.

Water can keep you in good health, and can even aid healing of illnesses that are thought to be incurable.

Simply by getting enough good water, and eliminating the food or drinks that break down your health and cause you to dehydrate, will make you feel so much better.

It would be wonderful if everyone, everywhere on Earth had access to good, clean water. Even though there is more water on Earth than there is land, in some parts of the world it takes a bit more effort to find sources of clean drinking water.

Some wonderful people work hard to dig wells or channel fresh water to villages in need.

Collecting rain water and storing it in rainwater catchment tanks is another way to provide water for people. Rain water has been cleaned through its journey up to the sky on its water cycle.

Even if it was once a part of a muddy puddle, the sun's job of evaporating the particles of water which then turn into clouds, helps to cleanse the water.

Everything in the natural world works together so well: The water keeps us living, the sun cleanses the water and the clouds send back down the needed rain.

Rain keeps the world filled with vegetation and helps the crops grow. The crops and plants provide food for animals and people.

The parts of the plants that aren't used or that fall to the ground—like autumn leaves, or fruit peelings—decompose and turn into dirt.

And why is that great? Because that adds nutrients to the soil. Good, rich soil then causes healthy plants grow from it.

The roots of the plants help to soak up water from the ground to keep them growing.

Some of the water in the leaves of the plants is then evaporated and sent up again to form clouds, and along with all the other evaporated particles of water vapour that have been collected. Then rain falls, and it just keeps the natural world going.

Earth is like a multi-million piece, multi-dimensional machine that has been made, and all the parts of it fit together just perfectly.

And water is the element that flows in and out and all around to keep it working like clockwork. Let's enjoy all the benefits of this amazing, miracle element—water!

Wood

Do you think you have a hard time **cleaning** your house? —Try **making** one like these strong men in Indonesia are doing!

Now that takes a good dose of strength and faith that it can be done!

Some of the houses that were made in Indonesia many years ago were pretty amazing.

Today, in most countries there are big power tools for log splitting and cutting.

However, what if you were out in the jungle with lots of natural wood, a few hand tools, and a vision to make a strong dwelling place? Who knows what great structures you'd come up with!

Wood can be carved into many useful things. Different types of trees provide wood that is good for different kinds of needs.

Creating and shaping things from scraps of wood is a fun skill to learn, and very useful too.

These cooking utensils here are wooden. Nowadays so many things are made of plastic, however that isn't a healthy choice when it comes to food and eating accessories.

Using natural items promotes better health. Wooden, earthenware or glass bowls for eating from even makes the food taste better!

Wood can be used to make furniture, and fancy decorations can be carved on them as well. This old fashioned chair in Albania has had a lot of work put into its making.

Look closely at the handmade designs on it. That took a lot of artistic skill, patience and time.

Just about anything you need to furnish your house can be made from wood.

You'll need to make the pillows, cushions and mattresses out of softer material. However, bed frames, benches, shelves, closets, tables and chairs are easily made out of wood.

Here is a man in Indonesia balanced on his wooden canoe. He must have had a lot of practice to be able to so skilfully glide over the water in such a thin water vessel, while standing up!

Row boats with their wooden oars and paddles can be useful for enjoying a pleasant time on a lake, or travelling in flooded areas. This one is from Uganda. If you are the one rowing, you'll get stronger too!

The Native Americans and Canadians, or "Indians" as Christopher Columbus originally called them, made canoes out of birch trees. The roots of black spruce trees were used as

rope to sew together the wooden canoe.

All sorts of styles and types of houses have been made using wood, and other useful natural items. The roof of a bungalow can be seen here, as it's held up with wooden rods.

A cabin out in the country has been made with logs. This fancy, old building from Russia has been built with planks of wood.

Some houses are made with clay bricks or bales of straw covered with a mud or clay plaster, though the roof framing is more easily made with wooden beams.

Houses made with natural materials—like clay, straw and wood without chemicals are better for the health of those living in them, as well as those who build them.

Wooden wheels, carts and wagons have been used for thousands of years.

Air-filled tyres on the modern vehicles does provide a smoother ride, however the speed the cars drive with makes the ride more dangerous.

Fumes from the modern, faster vehicles make people sick through the pollution it produces. A horse and wagon help the air stay cleaner as well.

Wouldn't you enjoy a ride through the countryside in an old-fashioned buggy?

The fuel for your vehicle would be the grass and grain the horses eat! It's a grass-powered wooden vehicle.

Carpenters know how to take rough pieces of wood and turn them in to smooth, strong, useful and nice-looking items.

Can you remember a famous carpenter from the Bible? Joseph, Jesus' earthly father was a carpenter. I wonder what he most enjoyed building.

He must have had known how to make things like wagon wheels, tables, benches, doors, and boxes.

Noah and his sons and their helpers had a huge wood-working project. He needed to build the giant Ark to survive the flood. They also needed to make cages for the animals, shelves and closets for storage, and all that was needed to make it like their home.

In cold places where wood is abundant, it can be used to heat the house. When logs are dry and chopped they can fuel a fire for warmth as well as for cooking.

Camping is a fun time to enjoy sitting beside a campfire. When the fire is built safely it can be relaxing to watch, and helpful as well. The smoke can even help to keep the mosquitoes away.

It's good exercise to collect wood, cut it smaller with an axe and stack it for use throughout the winter.

Trees provide so many needed things in life. But there are some people who live in places so cold that trees can't grow there. I'm sure glad I get to enjoy the beauty and benefits of trees.

Can you guess what is made out of wood in these pictures? The books! Trees play a big part in making paper. That must be why books are heavy.

It's almost endless the great uses for wood. It's one of the most beneficial resources on Earth. But we don't want to be wasteful with it.

Trees take a long time to grow, and paper and books take a lot of energy, water, wood and other resources to create them.

If you are an artist or writer, be sure to use paper wisely by making books and pictures that are pleasant, enjoyable, good, and a benefit to those that will read or look at them.

Want to join me for a picnic among the trees on a wooden picnic table?

Or perhaps we can sit and chat on a wooden porch overlooking the gentle tree-lined river?

Trees are useful for the wood they produce, but we'd sure miss them if there weren't enough trees around. Let's keep plenty of trees growing in the world all around, and not waste any. Let's be careful with them, and only use what's essential.

Sky

Good Morning! I think the early morning is one of the best times of day. It's a fresh

new start.

The Bible says God's mercies are new every morning. Each day is a new chance to live, to love, to learn and to laugh.

The rising sun is something we can count on happening each day. It's God's gift of love, life and light.

Even if you've had a difficult day, or if people you were depending on disappointed you, you know the sun will still rise again the next morning.

There's a saying: "Where there is life there is hope." And a verse in the Bible says, "Joy comes in the morning." (Psalm 30:5)

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God must be very artistic to create such beautiful displays at sunset. When the sun says, "See you tomorrow!" with an array of colours painted in the sky, it's marvellous to observe.

Those of us who can see, can at times take the gift of sight for granted.

"Are you an artist?" someone asked a man who they noticed was watching every last second of the sunset one evening.

"No. I was just blind for five years," was the man's reply.

He'd had his sight wonderfully restored and he appreciated every bit of natural beauty he was able to now enjoy.

Sunshine and blue skies are delightful and cheery. Of course, if every day has only sunshine, things will get a bit too dry.

The plants and farms need a good balance of sunshine and rain to make them grow well.

Our days usually have variety too, and are a collection of happy times and times of deeper feelings; some laughter and some tears. Both help us learn and grow inside.

A smile or word of encouragement can be like warm sunshine to someone who is having a rainy day—with tears.

It can be like the seeing the blue sky again after it has long been covered in rain clouds. A heart-warming, cheery sight!

Lightning is a very powerful and bright display. —And dangerous when it's too close.

If there was a way to capture the electricity that even one bolt of lightning releases, it would be enough to provide all the power a town needs, for quite awhile.

When there is a thunderstorm in the evening, we like to go to the window and watch the display. It can be a great light show, when you are safe and snug in your house.

God is a loving and kind God, but He's also very, very powerful. Perhaps seeing the lightning and hearing the thunder can remind us of His strength and ability to do anything; and how it's best to listen and obey Him.

Beautiful, white snow looks like the white fluffy clouds that have come down and settled on the ground.

It's a bit of a cold cloud to walk in, but calming and gives the land a whole new look.

Snowflakes are another example of God's artistic nature. It's amazing to think that each of those countless numbers of snowflakes that fall, is unique in shape and design.

If you have looked up into the sky when the snow is falling and seen the innumerable amount descending to the ground, it's quite a sight.

Some things can't be counted; but just admired and enjoyed.

Refreshing rain! Without it the crops would dry up and we'd all be hungry.

When it doesn't rain somewhere for a long time it's called a drought; if it rains too much that it causes the rivers to overflow, it results in flooding.

At the right time and in the right amounts rain keeps the land looking green, and producing food for us all to eat.

Some places on Earth nearly never rain; other places rain almost daily. The plants that grow or don't grow are determined by the rainfall and water available.

A lush, green countryside might mean that it rains often there. Then when the sun shines, the green beauty makes it worth it.

It takes both rain and sun to make a rainbow! It's always special to see one.

The way the sunlight shines through the droplets of water, which act as a prism of sorts, displays the seven colours of the rainbow.

Do you remember what they are? The colours blend from one to the next in a certain order each time.

Red

Orange

Yellow

Green

Blue

Indigo

Violet

When the clouds in the sky are pretty and pink in the evening, it's often an indication that the next day will be sunny with blue skies.

When I was young and my family had planned to go on an outing the next day, we were always very happy to see a pink sunset.

But there are some countries or areas that have special celebrations when it finally rains! It's a very joyous time.

Some stormy days start off first of all with rather dark pink or crimson-orange clouds.

There are signs in the sky that can give clues about the coming weather.

When you are in an aeroplane and you look out the window, sometimes you'll see what looks a bit like a fluffy, sandy beach. But it's the clouds that you are flying over. It could be raining down on the ground, but not on you, as you are way above them.

Some mountain peaks are so high they reach up above the clouds. If you lived up there, you'd have different weather than those living in the valley.

I like looking up to see the clouds in the sky, as I get to see so many formations, shapes and light displays too.

Have you ever seen rays of light shining out from a cloud? Or a very bright spot of sunlight on a cloud? It's awesome.

The beauty and colours displayed in the sky are inspiring. You never know what glorious displays will greet you next.

It's a wonderful reminder that God loves you and has taken thought to make such lovely formations for our viewing pleasure.

From sunrise to sunset the sky is almost always changing and displaying new shapes, shades and colours.

It's a heart-cheering way to end the day, to look up and see that the sunset is like a marvellous, colourful painting displayed as big as the sky.

Plants

Grass is an amazing natural carpet that is perfectly designed for a purpose. Clover is also a tasty treat for many animals, and very soft for us to walk or lie on.

When grass is cut, either by mowing the lawn, or by cows and sheep nibbling on it, then it grows back again even stronger.

It's different than other plants; made perfectly for what it's needed for. Animals can

then have plenty to eat, and it will be a regenerating meal. —Like a plate of food that just keeps filling up again, after being watered.

Grazing animals nibbling on the grass help to keep it from getting too long, as it just keeps on growing. But there are many types of grasses, from small to very thick and big.

Bamboo is a type of grass, only it grows much stronger and bigger than the grass in your garden—unless you live in a bamboo forest.

When you see bamboo, what does it remind you of? Perhaps big Panda bears. Or maybe a set of bamboo chairs and a table?

It can be used for so many things. It can be a pipe or channel for water; or beams for making a simple house.

Bamboo is not just one long, hollow tube, but inside it is divided into sections. This makes it stronger.

It can then also be useful for making small things, like the pencil case we made once. It worked great and looked nice too. —A natural, cylinder-shaped case with a lid.

Wild growing reeds by a pond, lake or river have been very useful building supplies for thousands of years. They can be used to make baskets, mats, house roofs, walls, and so much more.

Who grows all these plants, and has fashioned them to be a benefit to people? No one has to go around sowing the seeds and watering the reeds and wild grasses.

God uses the rain and dew to water plants, as well as to create and replenish the ponds with water. The birds, bugs and wind help to spread seeds.

Just think of everything that God makes and gives to us on Earth for free. The Bible says, “Things that are freely given to us of God.” (1 Corinthians 2:12)

Flowers are beautiful, colourful additions to nature. There are so many designs of flowers.

Some grow in water, some in well-watered gardens, others in the wild—in fields and forests. Others are made to endure the desert heat or grow on the edges of sandy beaches.

Flowers are made in such a way as to attract bees and butterflies to land on them. This helps them to be pollinated and produce seeds to grow new ones. The bees can make honey as well from what the flowers provide them with.

These helpful insects and the flowers work together as a team. They both need each other.

Have you ever seen a cherry tree covered with blossoms? It's fun to stand under one and have the petals fall all around you and on you, like floral snowflakes!

The fruit that grows on trees is delicious, though it might take a bit of work to care for the trees and to pick the fruit.

But if it wasn't for the hardworking bees doing their part, nothing edible would be on the tree to pick!

Some flowers even provide us with a nutritious snack. The seeds of the sunflower are edible and good for you. The birds also enjoy this natural "bird feeder" filled with crunchy seeds.

Plants are so necessary and beneficial!

A gift of roses can make someone feel loved. And roses come in so many different colours too. Did you know there are even bluish coloured roses?

Roses have a gentle and refreshing smell, and the soft velvety petals look classy.

The frangipani flower has a scent like the most beautiful perfume. A nice-smelling, pretty flower might make you think of a girl who likes to wear a lovely dress like a princess.

Flowers in a girl's hair can seem like that is what they were made for. It can look like a princess' tiara or little crown.

And what wedding is complete without a bouquet of flowers for the bride?

Flowers aren't only small, and on the ground. Some trees can look like one very big bouquet of flowers. Some trees can burst into blossoms of red or yellow, white or lavender—like this one here.

The poinsettia has been thought of as a symbol of Christmas in some parts of the world.

The plant it blooms on can grow large too.

Blossoming fruit trees attract bees and insects which help to pollinate it. This makes the flower create seeds. On fruit trees, the seeds that those flowers make are within delicious fruit.

Other trees display gorgeous or sweet-smelling flowers just to beautify the world, it seems.

Why do you think these plants have such sharp thorns and spikes?

These different types of cacti grow best in a desert climate, and they are containers of moisture and liquid.

The spikes save them from being eaten too fast, and thus they last longer. This tall type of cactus is called a “saguaro” and takes many years to grow.

There is a type of cactus that produces an edible fruit called a “prickly pear”. You have to carefully cut off the prickly skin that is covered in many tiny thorns.

The juicy fruit would be a refreshing snack if you were out in the hot desert, without much water.

Leaves come in all sorts of shapes, sizes, colours and artistic designs.

Some plants have very big leaves—like banana plants. These leaves can be used to make shelters, or even as a dinner plate!

Some plants have very small leaves, like fern fronds. And some leaves are very narrow—like pine needles.

Some trees and bushes lose their leaves during the autumn, allow it to rest during the winter. Before falling to the ground, the leaves say goodbye in a lovely way—by displaying lovely colours.

Other trees and plants are “evergreen” and always wear their leafy clothing, even through the winter.

Lebanon has been known for its cedars, for thousands of years. Its flag even has one of these beautiful trees on it.

The wood from cedars was used to build famous structures. I went to the forest in Lebanon and saw some of the beautiful trees.

I wondered if, in times past, these trees might have been much taller and bigger than are seen nowadays, since “the cedars of Lebanon” were world known and very famous. Who knows?

What plants and trees can produce is so needed and helpful for people. It might take a bit of hard work to use what God has provided us in nature, but through it we have what we need.

Light

One of the first things God said when creating “the heavens and the Earth” was, “Let there be light!” God loves light! And He wanted us to be able to enjoy the beauty and benefit of it too.

On the fourth day of the creation week God made some special lights in the sky:

The sun to shine when it’s daytime, and the moon at night.

God also placed stars in the sky, which add a gentle light on a clear night, and are marvellous to look at.

Just think, we get our natural light for free, from our Creator, and the light from the sun can even generate electricity too, using solar panels.

Where there is no electricity or the means to generate it, the light from fire is often used.

Many years ago, people often had oil lamps, and candles made of wax give a gentle light. Using fire to provide light is like a little, tiny bit of sunshine, isn’t it? Because the sun is a burning ball of fire!

Just be careful, as fire needs fuel to keep burning and can ignite whatever is nearby that is flammable. It can be a rather dangerous light, if not well guarded.

Isn’t it amazing how one candle can light many other candles and not lose any of its

light? It's like giving smiles away—you still have more and more to share!

When light was made available through electrical lights, it was a great help, and safer than fire. But it sure took Thomas Edison a lot of perseverance while trying to discover how to make the first light bulb.

Today there are many types of light bulbs made, some that use more or less electricity; some that shine coloured light; some big bulbs, and some real small ones—like on a Christmas tree. And some even smaller.

Electrical lights take precaution. Since they are made of glass, you need to be careful around them. Also, electricity is a very powerful energy to be mindful of, as it can be dangerous.

We need to turn off the lights that are not in use, to save electricity and money.

Some types of lights display a message to people. Many streets have traffic lights to show when it's safe for pedestrians to cross, and when to wait.

Lights on rescue vehicles help to warn other cars that they are coming and need other vehicles to give them space. This is usually accompanied by the loud sirens of the fire truck or ambulance.

Work vehicles often have blinking or flashing lights to help the cars and people around notice them and take care.

Some road signs and markings to show the edge of windy roads are painted with reflective material, so that car lights will reflect off them. This makes these appear to be lights shining, and are then easily seen.

Light reflects off of certain material. The sunlight can sparkle and reflect off of water in such beautiful ways.

The water or the sand that is filled with water on a beach, can act a bit like a mirror. Mirrors can cause light to bounce back and shine elsewhere.

Rippling water reflecting sunlight makes a bright and glorious display.

Have you ever seen the sparkles that shine and twinkle on the surface of a lake, as the

sun shines on the gentle moving water?

It looks like floating diamonds or like tiny golden stars have come to Earth to play. It's a glimpse of Heavenly beauty.

When do you think you appreciate light the most? When the sun is brightly shining down on you, or when it's all dark and then someone turns on a flashlight to help you see?

You might enjoy the bright sunshine, but there's a chance you also take it for granted. However, when you are desperately in need of light, you really are grateful to have some.

Dark clouds that show the bright outline of the sunshine are neat to look at. They can remind us that no matter how stormy things may seem for us, the Lord's light of love and solutions can shine in our heart and brighten our day.

Making shadow shapes is a fun game. All you need to play it is light and something to block the light from shining in one certain area—like your hand.

That's what a shadow is, it is simply the absence of light, when light is shining in that direction.

Shadows can make some very interesting shapes. Some shadows made by lights at night might be hard to figure out just what is causing that shape to form.

On a hot and brightly sunny day, sitting under the shade of a tree can feel great, as it's cooler.

However, you might really appreciate warming up in the sunshine for awhile, if it has been rainy and chilly for several days.

Using natural light and coloured glass, a bright picture can be displayed. These are called, "stained glass windows".

Before the days of computer screens, it must have been a rare and lovely sight to have a picture to look at that was brightly coloured and lit up the room.

Many churches and cathedrals around the world used this way to brighten things up and show Bible scenes in coloured glass window pictures.

It can be fun to make a "stain glass window" picture using translucent coloured plastic framed with black card or construction paper. It makes a nice greeting card, or decoration,

or gift.

Photographers know that one of the secrets to taking good pictures is in the lighting. Too much or not enough light makes a poor picture. And light that is shining in such a way as to create dark shadows is also not preferred.

There are some fancy techniques and equipment used to make the right amount of light to shine all around in the best way to make great pictures.

Did you know that “photo” means light? And that’s what cameras do, they use light to capture images.

Our eyes take in light and are like our own mini cameras, recording images in our brain. We need light to see. If things are too dark, we can’t see well.

Light can be used in different angles by photographers to create different effects.

Here is a couple on their wedding day. The sun shining through the trees appears to be shining right down on them, like a bright star bathing them in warm, heavenly cheer.

It seems to be saying, “God’s love is shining on us today. We we’ll be happy together as we stay in His light.”

This reminds me of the Bible verse that says,

“If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.” (1 John 1:7)

Seeing rays of light beaming out from behind a cloud is awe-inspiring. It reminds me of how God is. He stays rather hidden and invisible in humility, even though He so cleverly created the Earth. Yet, He lets us discover Him through His beautiful creation that is all around.

We see God’s creative touch in nature, even though we don’t see Him in all His glory. It’s a bit like rays of light shining out from the clouds that are hiding the bright sun from our full view.

We know the sun is there, because of the rays of light. We know God is around because we see His handiwork in nature. His wisdom and power, love and creativity shines out.

Have you ever gotten to see a fireworks display? The sounds made can be rather loud, but the colourful explosions of light make it worth it.

Some fireworks are coloured, some are white, some seem to sparkle or twinkle, and others shoot up in streaks.

On New Year's Eve, in places where it's easy to view celebrations that include fireworks, it can be a fun way to end the past year and get ready to start the new.

Just like there are various types of light patterns and designs, so is each new year different from the last one. However, we can choose to make the best of each year, and bring the light of cheer to everyone who is watching us.

When light shines from behind a person or object, it creates a silhouette. The outline or shape can be clearly seen.

It displays an artistic contrast and helps you to appreciate or notice something you might not have seen clearly in full bright light.

Why can't you see the colour or details on the person or object? To see colour you need light!

When the light is coming only from behind something, then it's not shining on the side that you are looking at. You then can only see that object or person in black-and-white.

Light changes the way things appear, and adds a delightful element.

Street lights, head lights, traffic lights, what do they all have in common? —Safety!

King David said to the Lord,

“Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.” (Psalm 119:105)

He knew that you can walk or travel more safely when you can see where you are going. If you can't see where you are stepping or what is in front of you, you are apt to fall or hit something, or get hurt or lost.

Reading and obeying God's Word is like using lights to travel. Listening to Him will help us know when to stop or when to go, and which way to take. We'll make it more safely and happily through our life, and stay on the right track—just where He wants us to be.

I love looking at the path of light that is shining on the surface of the water. It reminds me of the verse,

“The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” (Proverbs 4:18)

Imagine if you could walk right on the sparkling surface of the water, on that shimmering path made of light. Wouldn't that be neat?

God's love and the light of His Word, His goodness and beauty, His wisdom and care will lead us along in our life. As we look to Him, and depend on Him, as plants do with sunlight, He'll show us the best places to go, the right things to do; the bright, shining path of His will.

Light can give us messages.

A lighthouse warns the ships of the rocky shore.

Sunrise announces that the day has started. Sunset tells it will be night soon.

The traffic lights tell drivers when it's their turn to go and when to wait.

Little lights on an electrical device can indicate it is turned on or that there is electricity flowing through it.

Lights on a runway show the pilots where to go.

Christmas lights show us and others we are celebrating Christmas.

Flashing lights can be a warning or signal to be careful.

In a city there can be so many coloured lights trying to give messages to people.

Bright advertisement signs or building names attract attention at night.

Airports use large screens with messages to show the flight timings, schedules and information.

If you arrived in a new city at night, the brightly lit signs on hotels would help you to distinguish them from other buildings on a dimly lit street.

The scores of a sport being played might be displayed real big on a screen with letters and numbers made up of little lights.

Coloured florescent lights often decorate and light up shops and restaurants.

If you are trying to sleep, being shielded from bright light is nice. Light brings energy and can keep you awake. So a nice, snug room that is dimly lit might help you to sleep in longer in the morning, or take a good nap on a sunny afternoon.

In some ways light is like water—it will find its way through any little cracks. This helps us get enough light in our house. We don't have to try to attract it. It will come shining through our windows, or all around a room when a light is turned on.

Light has power over darkness. When a light shines, the darkness vanishes. Light is powerful. Sometimes it might be seen like a strong flash of lightning, and other times just as a soft glowing candle.

Some days are fun and filled with great things; other days are difficult and a struggle.

Some days you wish would go on and on, as some special event is happening, and you don't want it to stop. Other days you are eager for rest and hope the next day will bring better things your way.

But no matter where you are, when the sunlight fades—whether you are in a mansion or in a tent at a refugee camp, due to some difficult disruption—you can rest assured that God sees you very clearly.

He knows right where you are. He can see you and hear you, and is near to you, day or night; in the darkness or in the light.

Light is energy! On Earth we get energy from the light of the sun. Sunlight makes the crops and plants grow—giving people and animals energy from what they eat. The sun works the Earth's water cycle, and with flowing water we can create hydro-power electricity. Light helps us to see colours, and colours can affect the way we feel and get us in the mood to do different things. What we see can stimulate us and give us emotional energy or get us motivated to do certain things in certain ways.

Without light we couldn't see. The right amount of sunlight is good for our health, and give us vigour, warmth and strength.

Just about everything you like can be enjoyed because of light shining in some way, sometime. Light brings life!

Mountains

Mountains are mysteries that seem to beckon only the brave, skilled and daring to discover.

What is at the top? What will I see from way up there? Does it have caves, and what is inside of them?

They also have a majestic look to them, like a patient, big, old king sitting on his throne, year after year, with the people of the country around him. Mountains can represent strength and stability.

God and His kingdom are sometimes referred to with the symbolism of a mountain—tall, above all the low lands of the Earth, strong, stable, majestic, mysterious and awe inspiring.

The way a tall mountain reaches up to the sky makes us look up and remember the One who created the Earth, the sky, the sea, and all that is therein.

King David said, *“I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and Earth.”* (Psalm 121:1-2)

Getting through our life victoriously can at times seem to take the strength of those who climb mountains. We must look to the Lord for His help. Then we use our muscles of faith and choose to persevere, and at last we rejoice that we have reached our goals.

We get stronger with each bit of effort we exert to make progress, if it's doing what God knows is best. It's worth it in the end!

Mountains of all types are found around the world. Some are nearly always frozen or snow-covered. Some are very pointed and jagged, and very steep and rugged looking, while others look like they have a flat surface at the top.

Many are windy and cold. Trees that grow on the stormy mountains with strong wind are sought out for use. The wood is the best for some types of things, after having grown in those conditions.

Different types of animals live in the various mountain terrains around the world. The steep slopes can be manoeuvred and scaled by skilful creatures like mountain goats and sheep, and llamas. Other animals like cougars and eagles live there too.

How would you like to live on a mountain? Many houses and even huge dwelling places built, such as monasteries or fortresses have been built and lived in on mountain cliffs. Or even living quarters dug out of the rocks of mountains.

The task of building huge structures on a mountain required much perseverance and teamwork, and lots of hard, tough work. Builders knew they had to make it strong if they wanted it to last.

Today some very old structures that were built on mountains are still around—hundreds of years later.

Some mountains aren't "calm and stable" however, and they are the gateway for volcanic eruptions. Some volcanoes smoke from time to time; some have major hot lava action going continually. Some volcanoes have only erupted once and have then remained dormant.

Mountainous areas that have previously been covered by a volcanic eruption are some of the most fertile places to grow crops and do farming. As a result of the volcano, the soil that has been enriched by it, causes food to grow much better there than in the "safe" over-used and over-farmed plains.

Maybe that can remind us that our life's difficulties can help us to bear more "fruit" or help us to do good with our lives, later on.

Away from the crowded cities and thronging market places, the mountain is a good place to hear God speaking to you.

Of course He can talk to you anytime and anyplace, but many great men of old resorted to mountainous places to get alone with God, to listen to Him and pray.

The words they heard from Heaven while on the mountain made a big difference—in their life and in the lives of the many others who heard what they passed on from God.

Even Jesus often took His disciples up and away from the multitudes to the mountains.

There they could listen to God's Words and instructions without the distractions of village life. It wasn't easy, but proved to be memorable and wonderful.

Sometimes huge obstacles that stand in the way of our making progress, or something that seems way too big for us to take care of can seem like a "mountain"; we just don't know how we can get over it.

Yet, even the toughest and seemingly impossible-to-climb mountains have been climbed to their summit. It took those who had the willingness and desire to do it, and who wouldn't quit until the goal was reached.

Sometimes they had to pause for awhile until the weather conditions were right; but even patiently waiting took determination, just as much as the actual hard climbing. Mountaineers know that to reach their goals they need more than action, they need faith, wisdom, careful planning and preparation.

Did you know that most of the Earth's fresh water originates from in the mountains? The water on mountains is fresh and clean, and tastes so sweet to a thirsty hiker.

Rainfall and melting mountain snow, and waterfalls can run down and fill the rivers, lakes and streams with fresh new water.

Mountains aren't only found on land, actually. There are huge mountains under the surface of the sea! An island can be the top of a mountain, with the rest of it down under the ocean.

In fact, there are more mountains under water than there are on land. And that's not all! Even planet Mars has a very tall mountain called, "Olympus Mon".

Wild flowers and a great variety of plant species grow on mountains. Some mountains are the only place certain plants are found.

Table Mountain—a very flat topped mountain in South Africa—has a diverse range of plant life. For example, there are several hundreds of different types of daisies found on it.

Some mountain tops reach up above what is called the "tree line"; or beyond the place where trees are capable of growing. No trees can grow on the top part of a very tall mountain that is up too high.

There the air is too cold, the oxygen too thin, and there is insufficient deep and rich soil to support plant growth.

To find out a mountain's height, it is measured to see how high it reaches above sea level. The world's highest peak on land is Mount Everest, in the Himalayas. It is about 8,850 meters tall!

This mountain that seems so stable, like many mountains do, gave a reminder in 2015, that the only thing truly dependable to put our trust in is God.

A huge Earthquake shook Nepal, and even the mountain was shaken. In times like this we can find assurance in God's Word that says, "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." (Isaiah 54:11)