



Volume 12 Issue 16

April 16, 2017

EVER WRITTEN THE BIBLE?

I love preaching about growing in our relationship with God. I speak often about reading the Bible, praying, and meditating. But I'd never thought about copying Scripture as a spiritual discipline until I met a sister who copied the entire Bible...by hand. Think about that! I had to ask her about it. I wanted to know what her task was like and what she gained from it. I also told her I wanted to write an article. She consented but asked that I not mention her name. Upon first glance, this might seem a bit strange. She says, "When I first told my brother I was writing the Bible, he said, 'You can't do that! God's already done that for you!' His joking taught me to say I was copying God's word." In Old Testament times, the kings of Israel were required to write a copy of God's word for themselves to use as a guide for leading the nation (Deut. 17:18-20). So, the idea is not new.

This sister's time spent copying the Scriptures was personal time spent with God's word rather than any design to bring attention to herself. However, it is my desire to share the fruits of her handwriting journey so we all might see the value of private devotions. If someone can copy the entire Bible out of pure love for it, can we not at least read it?

Q: What motivated you to copy the Bible by hand?

A: *In 1984, I copied several Psalms to help me survive depression. It was so comforting. I later copied Matthew and Joshua to celebrate my son's birthdays since they were named after those books. Every summer I studied Proverbs with them. After they left home, I copied Proverbs to remember those special days. At a gospel meeting in 1985, Harold Comer asked the question, "Ever known anyone who has written the Bible?" I thought "What a huge time*

consuming accomplishment that would be.” In 2005, I attended the Dead Sea Scrolls Exhibit and that was the match that lit the fire. Thoughts of those who copied God’s word and lost their lives flooded my emotions. I left with a desire to hand copy the Bible as a gift for my sons that they would find after my death. Never did I think I would be the one receiving such a huge gift to enjoy now! Also, my dad was a great inspiration to me, encouraging me to stay with it. After I finished copying the Scriptures, I wrote some reflections about it and gave that piece to him this past holiday season on the anniversary date of him obeying the gospel thirty years ago.

Q: What did the process of copying the Scriptures by hand do for you spiritually?

A: God’s perfect word going through my hand, fingers and eyes has helped my life’s struggles of depression, grief, sorrow, anger, bitterness, loneliness, guilt and emotions that rob me of joy. God has blessed me with hiding His word in my heart (Ps. 119:11). His word has made me know joy and gladness (51:8) as I have found a way to be still and know Him (46:10).

Q: How long did it take you to write a copy of the Bible?

A: I first wrote the New Testament twice – one for each

son. I started writing the Old Testament on my birthday in June of 2005 and finished in September 2008.

Q: What one major thing did you learn from doing this?

A: “Know Me.” God is teaching, “I have made a way for you to know Me.” It became very personal. Ezekiel was the hardest book to write but I learned my best lesson in my hardest writing. Over and over, the word ‘know’ is in Ezekiel.

Q: Are there special memories that came from your time spent copying the Word?

A: I loved writing beside my granddaughters while they slept. It felt so comforting. One day I walked into the room to see my three-year-old granddaughter holding my Bible, pen and notebook. She was scribbling her best over my writing. She said, “Look Grammy, I am writing just like you.” Also, one night I looked up to see my husband watching me with tears. He said, “What you are doing is so beautiful to watch!” He repeated those words many times during the next four years. My mother who struggles with sight copied Philippians and gave it to me for my birthday. Other family members and friends have done some of their own copying as a way to concentrate on the Word. Once I was writing at a hospital and let out an “Oh no.” The nurse asked, “What’s wrong and

what are you writing?" When I told her my glasses broke, she said, "Come on. We'll fix this!" She took me to the specialist at the hospital and I got new glasses – free! And too, I have had a special place in my heart for families who suffer from adultery and divorce. I encourage and challenge them to use copying God's word as a tool to rise above this sin (Job 31:11). We can have new strength and not be weary as Isaiah 40:31 teaches.

Q: Are there other things you found amazing as you wrote?

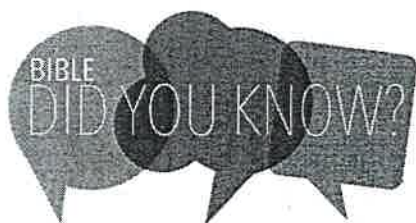
A: I soon learned that almost daily, where I was writing would correspond with something happening in my life. A fun example is that I dislike flying. On a flight to San Diego, I opened my Bible to write. I was at Acts 1:9 – Jesus flying in the clouds! I looked out of my window at God's beautiful creation and laughed at my fears. And during a time when a wrong was done towards me, I was writing in 1 Kings 21 where Jezebel had stolen Naboth's vineyard.

Q: You mentioned something about some fun verses. What do you mean?

A: My fun verses are Isaiah 55:12; Job 38:7, 22 and Zechariah 10:8. Did you know God whistles? This reminded me joyfully of my whistling grandma. Pertinent to our times, our sister said, As those around our nation

worry about losing stock, savings and 401k's, I have labored to leave a spiritual inheritance to my children and children's children as taught in Proverbs 13:22 and Psalm 78:1-8. Even if my copies are lost, my children know my gift to them and my love of God. That's a great comfort to me!

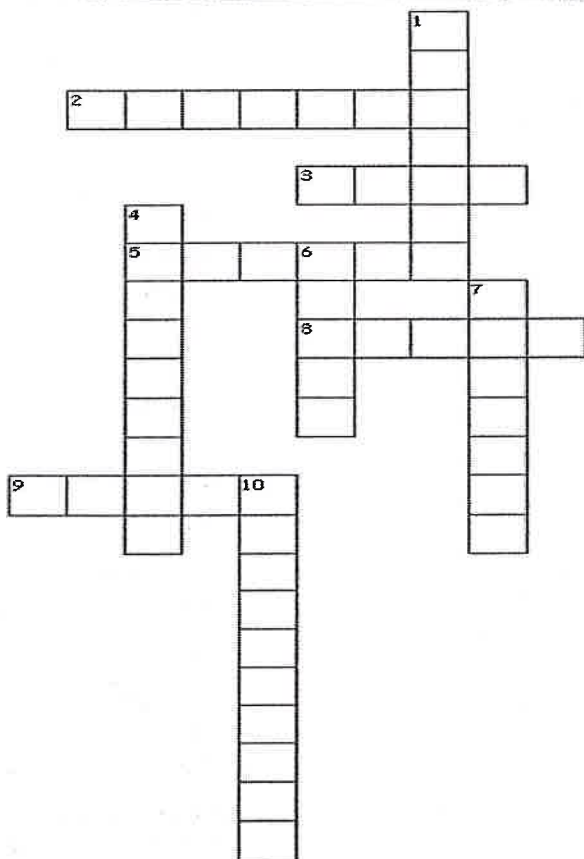
Well said. Whether you copy it or read it, let us devote much quiet time to God and His word. It is the path to holiness and Christ-likeness. — Jeff May



Moses renamed Joshua from his original name, Hoshea. "Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun, Joshua," Num. 13:16. Hoshea means "Salvation" while Jehoshua means "Jehovah is Salvation."

The

U L T M T E
C R S S W O R D



ACROSS

2. Offered to give a drink to camels of Abraham's servant. (Gen. 24:15-20)
3. Sold his birthright for a bowl of stew. (Gen. 25:31-33)
5. Where Jacob dreamed of ladder between heaven and earth (Gen. 28:10-11)
8. He was offered as a sacrifice by his father (Gen. 22:9-10)
9. He tricked his father into giving him his brother's blessing (Gen. 27:21-27)

DOWN

1. Name of the son born to Abram and Hagar (Gen. 16:15)
4. King of Philistines who rebuked Isaac for lying about wife (Gen. 26:9-11)
6. Jacob put goat skins on his hands to appear to be this. (Gen. 27:11-16)
7. Twins struggling in Rebekah's womb were two of these (Gen. 25:22-23)
10. Jacob was able to get Esau to sell him this (Gen. 25:31-33)