

Rich Young Ruler

BASED ON MATTHEW 19:16-30

PIX

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LATER, A YOUNG MAN STOPS JESUS TO ASK A QUESTION.

TEACHER, WHAT SHOULD I DO TO RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE?

KEEP GOD'S COMMANDMENTS.

I ALREADY DO THAT—EVER SINCE I WAS A LITTLE BOY.

YOU ARE STILL MISSING ONE THING. SELL EVERYTHING YOU HAVE AND GIVE THE MONEY TO THE POOR. THEN FOLLOW ME.

BUT THE MAN GOES AWAY SAD, BECAUSE HE IS QUITE WEALTHY. THE TRAVELERS KEEP MOVING TOWARD JERUSALEM. IN JERICO ...

PLEASE, LET ME THROUGH!

HA! ZACCHAEUS, THE CROOKED LITTLE TAX COLLECTOR, WANTS TO SEE JESUS.

A dynamic illustration of a space emergency. In the upper left, a space station is exploding, with bright yellow and orange flames and debris. In the lower right, a space shuttle with a blue and white body and a prominent red stripe is shown from a low angle, moving towards the station. Its engines are firing, creating a large, bright orange and yellow plume of fire and smoke. The background is a deep blue space filled with several large, dark, irregularly shaped asteroids. The overall composition is action-packed and urgent.

**ONLY GOD IS POWERFUL
ENOUGH TO HELP THE SHUTTLE
GET THROUGH TO THE
DAMAGED SPACE STATION**

DANGER IN SPACE

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Part One

Jeff unfastened his seat harness and gave a gentle push with his feet. It made him tumble head over heels in a slow roll. Being weightless was one of the things he liked best about shuttle travel. The bigger spacecraft used for long trips had artificial gravity, but not shuttles. Shuttles were basic transportation between earth and her orbiting satellites and space stations.

Jeff grasped a handbar as he floated past the mid-deck observation window. The view of earth was awesome.

"It's beautiful, isn't it?" said Paul, the shuttle's technical officer.

"It sure is," Jeff answered. "But it makes me feel sad."

"Are you leaving home or going home?" Paul asked as he folded up Jeff's launch seat.

"Both, I guess," Jeff answered. "My parents are missionaries on the Ag-4 space station. I live with them for one year, and then I go back to earth to live with my grandparents for a year."

"How come?" Paul asked. "There are lots of kids living in space full-time."

"I know, but my parents want me to feel as at home on earth as in space," Jeff replied. "My

dad says it's easy for people living in space machines to believe that humans control the universe, not God."

Paul didn't say anything more, but he made a funny face when Jeff mentioned God. As Jeff turned back to watch the earth grow smaller, the sun flashed off a small object in the distance. "Do you know what that is?" Jeff asked Paul.

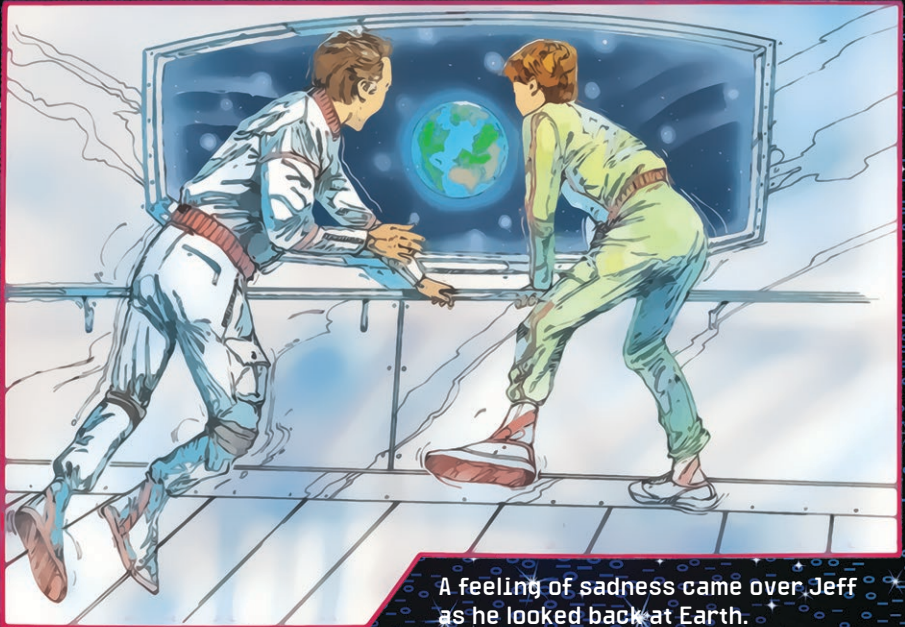
"It's a new communications satellite," he answered. "But it's not going to be much help to the folks on earth unless a space tug pulls it into a geosynchronous orbit."

"I know what that means," Jeff said proudly. "The satellite circles the earth at the same speed the earth turns. That way it stays over the same spot on the ground."

"I couldn't have explained it better myself," Paul said with a smile. "Do you also know how high it has to be to attain a geosynchronous orbit?"

Jeff answered quickly, "22,370 miles."

"You know your stuff, kid. I think I'll call you 'Gigabyte Brain,'" Paul said teasingly. "Do you know what satellite is just coming into view now?"



A feeling of sadness came over Jeff as he looked at Earth.

"It's the North American solar power satellite. Wow, has it grown since I saw it last year!" Jeff exclaimed.

"Bigger and better," Paul said with a smile. "Earth never seems to have enough power, but at least now we know how to make clean power—no more acid rain. There just doesn't seem to be a problem people can't solve sooner or later," Paul said as he floated over to the food preparation area. "How about joining me for lunch? I can fix moon burgers and freeze fries."

"Sounds great!" Jeff answered, pushing himself away from the window. "I'll pull out the eating trays while you

nuke the food."

When the food was ready, Jeff bowed his head and prayed. Paul watched him quietly for a moment and then asked, "Why did you do that?"

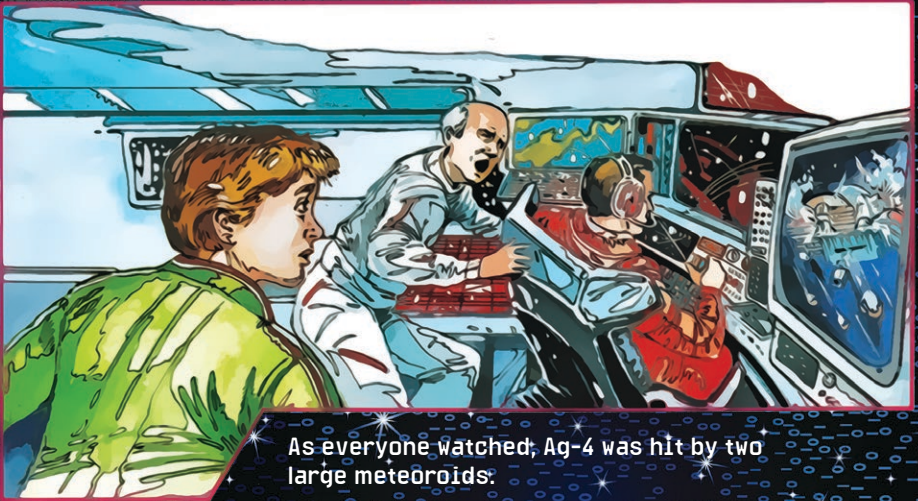
"Do what?" Jeff said.

"Pray," Paul answered.

"To thank God," Jeff replied.

"Don't you ever pray?"

"Not me!" Paul said with a chuckle. "Oh, I sometimes say 'God, help me' when something goes wrong, but I don't really believe there's a God who will come to my rescue. That God business is just a bunch of old Earth fables as far as I'm concerned," Paul said as he looked at his watch. "Oops! I'm due back on the flight deck."



As everyone watched, Ag-4 was hit by two large meteoroids.

How about cleaning up this mess? I'll ask the captain, if it's okay for you to observe. We should soon have Ag-4 on the view screen."

As Jeff watched Paul's feet disappear through the hatchway, he prayed, "Paul's a nice guy, Lord, but he doesn't know You're real. Can You help him see that You really do exist?"

Jeff was just finishing his chore when Paul called, "Come on up, Jeff. The captain says you can watch us work."

No one seemed to notice Jeff as he entered the flight deck. Something on the view screen had everyone's attention.

"Looks like trouble, Captain," the copilot was saying. "There's a swarm of meteoroids pelting Ag-4, and their laser cannon isn't working."

"You're right, that does mean trouble," the captain answered. "Stations like Ag-4 can take a lot of bumps and bangs from small meteoroids, but the large ones can do real damage. We'd better keep at a safe distance and watch to see what happens. Without a laser cannon of our own, there's not much we can do to help them."

A wave of fear passed through Jeff. Then the thought crossed his mind, *Maybe the shuttle isn't able to help Ag-4, but God can.* Jeff started to close his eyes to pray, but he suddenly felt embarrassed and looked up to see if Paul was watching. Just then a burst of light came from the view screen; Ag-4 was rocked by two explosions.

Continued next week.

Wonders of God's World – VISITORS FROM OUTER SPACE

Our earth is “visited” by chunks of metal and rock every day, although only about one hundred or so actually land on the earth’s surface. God planned for the atmosphere around the earth to protect us from these meteoroids. When these “visitors” (which range in size from tiny specks of dust to huge, flying mountains) pass through the atmosphere, friction makes most of them burn up. The burning meteors make bright light, which we can see in the night sky. We call them falling stars or shooting stars.

Pieces of matter speeding through space are called meteoroids. Those that survive earth’s atmosphere and strike the earth are called meteorites. Near Winslow, Arizona, there is a huge crater 1,097 yards in diameter. It is believed that a giant meteorite struck here many years ago, causing the crater.

A meteor approaches earth from outer space. As it enters earth’s upper atmosphere it begins to heat up. Friction heats it to white heat. Usually it breaks up into small pieces that burn up completely before hitting the earth. Rocket and satellite reports show that the earth is gaining weight at the rate of 3,000 to 30,000 tons a day from meteoric dust.

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Wonder Point

There are three possible explanations for this verse: “Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God” Matthew 19:24.

1. Jesus may have meant literally what He said about both the camel and the needle’s eye.
2. The word “camel” can be translated “rope” So Jesus may have been talking about threading a rope through a needle.
3. People used to say that the “needle’s eye” was a gate into Jerusalem where a camel could just make it through. There is almost no proof for that idea.

It doesn’t really matter which one of these Jesus meant. What’s important is that a camel is about the biggest animal in Bible lands, and the needle’s eye would be the smallest hole, so Jesus was illustrating something that was humanly impossible.

fun shop





Pause a minute

1. You love ice cream, your dog, a movie, and God—but each the same way? No, it's a pretty sure thing you love your mom more than a movie, and your dog more than dessert. So how do you love God more than all else?

Read Mark 12:30.



Take a look back

3. What shows God your love for Him: with your mind (words or thoughts); your soul (deep feelings, emotions, attitudes); and your strength (even when you're sick or tired)?

key verse

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."

Mark 12:30



Record your thoughts

4. Write down ways you most enjoy showing God your love. Use your senses—for instance, by touch (serving with good deeds)? Sound (praising Him)? Or sight (reading His Word)?

Read more this week about loving God:

☐ Exodus 20:3 ☐ Matthew 19:16–30 ☐ Luke 10:27

**faith
forward**
in touch with God



Play it out

2. What does it mean to love Him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength? Imagine wanting God like rocky road ice cream, hugging Him close like your puppy, or standing by Him like a best friend. This is what it's like to love God in every way. You're all about Him and putting Him first—above the puppy, friends, or in the case of the rich young ruler, your stuff. You want to get to know Him like a close friend, you drop everything to spend time with Him and go the distance with Him.

