

**NATURE HONORS
FOR
PATHFINDER CLUBS**

Club Devotions from Nature

Bob Holbrook

Cover Design: Claudia C. Pech Moguel

Design and Layout: Claudia C. Pech Moguel

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INTRODUCTION

“Sing, O heavens, for the Lord has done it! Shout, you lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, you mountains, O forest, and every tree in it! For the Lord has redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel.” (Isaiah 44:23)

“Many are the ways in which God is seeking to make Himself known to us and bring us into communion with Him. Nature speaks to our senses without ceasing. The open heart will be impressed with the love and glory of God as revealed through the works of His hands. The listening ear can hear and understand the communications of God through the things of nature. The green fields, the lofty trees, the buds and flowers, the passing cloud, the falling rain, the babbling brook, the glories of the heavens, speak to our hearts, and invite us to become acquainted with him who made them all.” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 85)

Devotional

The above verse and quote set the stage for this effort to bring some devotional thoughts to our Pathfinders via the tool of the Honors system. Each devotional is designed to relate to a specific Pathfinder Honor in the nature category as will be noted for each one. They are not to be construed as completing any requirements for the indicated Honor, and certainly one should not consider the Honor completed after reading these thoughts! In some cases, the thoughts for the day are at best remotely tied to the Honor in question. I have made what amounts to an attempt at illustrating the thoughts expressed in the references above that we can see God in all of nature around us and I am very sure that there are many more devotional thoughts that each reader would be able to draw from the topics, often much better ones than the ones I’ve chosen to bring out.

I do not pretend to be a writer; in fact, counting all the starts and stops I have had in putting these devotionals together, it has taken me over seven years to complete them. My apologies to my academy English teachers, Miss Ingram at College View Academy

and Mrs. Hill at Platte Valley Academy! Were they alive today, I'm sure they would have some serious coughing spells if they heard I was even attempting this project! Sorry, ladies! I know you tried your best.

If even just a handful of readers find themselves closer to our awesome Creator God through this simple effort, I will feel much exonerated for the time spent (I will the time and effort I put into this project will have been worth it) and give God all the credit since with extreme frequency, as I looked at the topic of a given Honor, I had no idea where to start or what to write about or if there might be a verse or a quote that might fit in some way but as I put my mind to it, thoughts and ideas came from the "Unknown Source" and I could praise God for each completion.

Activity Ideas

Each devotional also includes a related activity. I don't believe in static reading, but rather reading something and then putting its message into action through discovery and adventure. Some of the activity ideas in these devotionals may be simple, while others might be more advanced, but all of them are designed to enhance the learning and enjoyment of the topic. If you will take the time to follow through with them, you will benefit greatly (I hope)! Keep in mind, you don't have to do them immediately; you can also do them later in the day, later in the week, or even on the weekend—it's your choice.

God bless,
Robert "Bob" Holbrook

COALS OF FIRE

This devotional corresponds with the Alternative Fuels Honor.

“Therefore if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.” (Romans 12:20, NKJV)

“We may never know until the judgment the influence of a kind considerate course of action to the inconsistent, the unreasonable, and unworthy. If, after a course of provocation and injustice on their part, you treat them as you would an innocent person, you even take pains to show them special acts of kindness, then you have acted the part of a Christian...” (*Medical Ministry*, p. 209–210)



Today’s thoughts are perhaps among the most difficult for any of us to accept, much less put into practice. When someone wrongs us, it is only natural (and logical) to feel the impulse to retaliate in one form or another. “Fight fire with fire!” we may want to say. We live in a society where bullies abound (and not just in school). We must either Our natural instincts is can be to withdraw, or lash out and strike back.

However, all we accomplish by doing that is adding fuel to the fire. But there is an alternative fuel available—God’s fuel. Romans 12:19 is very clear about it: “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”

These verses in Romans point back to an incident in Israel’s history. We can read about it in 2 Kings 6:8–23. The Syrians had invaded Israel and were causing serious problems for God’s people, but God chose to pull a joke on them by causing them to go blind. Elisha then guided these blinded Syrians to Samaria, the capital, and walked them right into the main plaza in the center of the city. Then God gave them their eyesight back—just in time for them to see they were completely surrounded by Israelite soldiers!

The Israelite king’s first impulse was to take revenge on the Syrians and attack them. So he asked Elisha, “My father, shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?” I can imagine he had already drawn his sword and

his soldiers had done the same, waiting for his command. (At least they were waiting for Elisha's final word, respecting that it was he who had brought their enemies to them in the first place.)

But what was Elisha's answer? He wanted them to use an alternative fuel instead. 2 Kings 6:22 tells us what he said: "You shall not kill them...Set food and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master." Then what did Elisha himself do? Verse 23 says: "Then He prepared a great feast for them; and after they ate and drank, he sent them away and they went to their master [the king of Syria]." And what was the end result of Elisha's orders? The verse and chapter concludes, "So the bands of Syrian raiders, came no more into the land of Israel." Wow!

Now this story doesn't mean that every time you use this "alternative fuel," you're automatically going to get amazing results right away. You see, as humans we have conditioned ourselves to prefer instant gratification instead of long-term. We want everything right now. God does do things in His own time, but His actions are effective and final nevertheless. You've seen what our other quote above says, right? "We may never know until the judgment..." That is why we also read in James 1:2, 3: "Count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience." So, while using this alternative fuel isn't easy, in the end it is totally worth the effort.



Activity Ideas

Can you think of someone in your life right now who might need you to heap some coals of fire on their heads? Well...go for it!