

The Caller

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Confidence Corner John F. Board

In this week's *Confidence Corner* we want to consider a few thoughts regarding the Sumerian Language. Sumerian is the oldest known written language, with inscriptions dating back as far as the fourth millennium B.C. Sumerian is considered a language isolate. It is not a part of the Semitic language family.

Some of the words of the Old Testament (the Hebrew Bible) find their roots ultimately in Sumerian. Take for example the Hebrew term meaning palace (heikhal) that comes from the Akkadian term ekallu (m) that comes from the Sumerian egal (or large house). Sometimes, therefore, a little knowledge of the Sumerian language can be helpful to a study of the Hebrew Bible.

Take for example a passage found in Ezekiel 8:14. The Biblical text mentions Tammuz, which was another name for the Sumerian god Dumuzi. Dumuzi was the husband of the goddess Inanna. In Sumerian mythology, he was kept in the underworld as a ransom for his wife, Inanna. Ezekiel records women gathered at the city gate that was mourning Tammuz/Dumuzi. This is one of the abominations recorded in chapter 8.

Without the knowledge that the women were mourning over a deity that was a false deity, the understanding of Ezekiel 8:14 would be lacking. Ezekiel recorded, through inspiration, one of the detestable forms of idolatry prevalent in his day. The worst kinds of immoralities were employed by this cult in an effort to magically control nature. Yet Ezekiel was assured that he would see yet greater abominations even after this was revealed to him.

So one can see that though most of our time should be given to a consideration of the text of the Bible, a cursory knowledge of the culture and language of the Sumerians is helpful to our greater understanding of the document ultimately from the hand of God.

jfb

[John here. I wanted to write a note and say that the article below is not mine. I did make some adjustments to it. There was no author listed for the article or else I would have given that author credit. As I read the article, I thought it was very timely. I hope you enjoy it]

Hope

What's left when everything else is stripped away? At the end of 1 Corinthians 13, Paul says there are three remaining things: faith, hope, and love. Paul uses those three words in one verse in other places. To him, they were the three greatest Christian virtues.

Though intertwined, Paul distinguishes their functions in 1 Thessalonians 1:3. He wrote, "We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ."

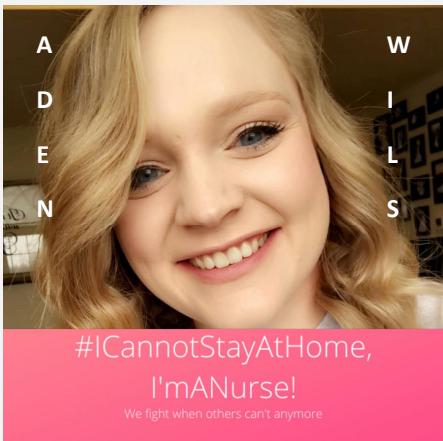
Faith produces good works. Paul could not imagine faith without works. If a person believes something, it will lead to action. James would later comment that faith without works is dead. Strong beliefs lead to strong action.

Love leads to labor. The word Paul uses for labor is different from the word he uses for works. There is pain involved in the word-a sense of weariness. Faith may prompt people to do good deeds, but only love compels them to continue to work when it is painful or unpleasant.

Hope, according to Paul, inspires endurance-the ability to keep going when the effort surpasses an acceptable threshold of pain and threatens to destroy the spirit. Hope sees better days ahead. It muffles the voices of those who say "give up" and whispers encouragement to the downtrodden. Hope says, "yes you can," when others say, "no you can't." Hope completes an action that faith begins and love compels.

In Col. 1:5, Paul teaches that faith and love spring from hope, he wrote, "the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven ..." Where does the hope come from? In the last part of that verse, he said it comes from "the gospel."

Don't let anyone take your hope away. Don't lose hope! Instead, marinate your soul in the gospel. It will produce hope, and hope will produce faith and love-the very things you need to live out the demands of any time you face.



Pray for the healthcare workers at the forefront of this pandemic.

