

The **LOST** **COUGAR**



The small town of Quilcene is just a few stores and homes huddled together at the base of the Olympic Mountains in the State of Washington. The steep slopes of these mountains are thickly covered with extremely tall evergreen trees. The beautiful mountain peaks are flecked with snow in summer and covered in deep snow in the winter. Most of these mountains are within the boundaries of the Olympic National Park, which covers thousands of square miles, and is just as wild as it was hundreds of years ago.

Hikers in the park often see wildlife such as bears, eagles and mountain goats. Cougars, or mountain lions, also live in the park, but they are rarely seen, as they like to keep their distance from humans. A person can hike in the mountains all their life and never see one of these beautiful animals.

However, one cougar recently left the park and wandered down the eastern slopes of the mountains looking for food. Cougar cubs usually stay with their mothers until they are 18 to 36 months old. During this time their mothers teach them how to hunt, along with other skills they need to survive. But for some reason, this young cougar, only about a year old, was on its own and not yet able to find the food it needed to stay healthy. As a matter of fact, it was starving. It only weighed about 35 pounds instead of the 100 pounds it should have weighed.

One night, it glided through the shadows of the buildings of Quilcene. Many a farmer or rancher in the area would have shot the cougar on sight if they had seen it prowling by their barns or stables.

As daylight approached, the cougar found what looked like a good place to rest. It saw an open gate to a large animal pen filled with hay. The weak cougar went in and made a nest in the hay.

JUNE 20, 2021

Messages
of God's Love

“Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.”
John 6:37



A Verse to Memorize

Amazingly, the cougar had wandered into the one place where it would find the help it needed so badly. It had wandered into an animal rescue center! A worker there named Sara found the animal sleeping on the hay, and she saw at once how sickly and close to starving it was, almost ready to die. She took the little animal to a vet as quickly as possible, and it was so weak that it didn't even fight them when they handled it. The vet gave it some shots and cleaned and bandaged some sores on its front leg. **But Sara and the vet still thought the young cougar was so sick that it might not live, even with the very best care.**

Sara took the cougar back to the animal rescue center, cared for it and made sure it had good food. For a few days she didn't know if it was going to survive, but then it started putting on weight, and a week later it started snarling and growling whenever she approached its pen.

Sara was not upset about the cougar being angry and not appreciating all the care she gave it. She was happy, because she knew it was feeling better and acting like a healthy cougar would.

In Washington, cougars that are rescued cannot be released again into the wild, so Sara searched for a possible home for him. She found an animal refuge park in Florida that was willing

to take him. She packed the little cougar up in an animal crate and shipped it to Florida, where he could live happily.

That young cougar wandering in the night, starving and unable to take care of itself, reminds me of what it's like to be a lost sinner. Sinners are lost because their sins have taken them far from God. Sinners are hungry, too. I don't mean hungry in their stomachs, but hungry in their hearts. They try to fill their hearts with things that were never meant to satisfy their heart hunger, but the more things they try, the emptier they feel.

Sinners also can't take care of their sins on their own. They need someone bigger and stronger than themselves to take care of them. Thankfully, there is Someone who is ready to take care of every sinner! That Person is the Lord Jesus, who came to “seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

If you are a sinner, you don't have to stay in sin's darkness a moment longer. You may come to the Lord Jesus, who is the Savior of sinners, and put your trust in Him right now. He wants you to. He gave His life so He could save you from your sins. He is the One who will satisfy your heart. He said, “All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37). He will never turn you away if you come to Him!



God Cares

My family likes to freeze a lot of fruits and vegetables in the summertime to enjoy during the winter. One year, as the space in our freezer was filling up fast, we started praying for a second freezer. One particular afternoon, my parents were talking about what to do and decided to pray about it again. As Dad and Mom finished praying, the phone rang. One of my mom's aunts wanted to know if we could use another freezer, because she didn't need a large one anymore. **My family was so excited to see how God had faithfully and amazingly provided for us!**

God is a wonderful provider. He provides for our physical needs of food, clothing and shelter, and He has also provided for our spiritual needs—the needs of our heart. When God created us, He knew

that we would sin. Because God is perfect and cannot have sin near Him, our sin separates us from God. But God doesn't want us to be separated from Him—He wants a relationship with us. He wants us to be His own sons and daughters, and He has provided a way. **When Jesus came to earth many years ago, He died a cruel death, so that He could take the punishment for our sin.** He rose from the dead three days later so that we can have eternal life. Some people choose to ignore God's spiritual provision for them; they will have to bear their own punishment for sin—eternity in the lake of fire away from God. Don't reject the wonderful provision that God is offering you today! "Behold, what manner of love the Father [has given] us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John 3:1).

What Happens When We Eat?

Part 3

“Now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body.”

1 Corinthians 12:18-20

When that sandwich, apple and cookie you had for lunch have finally been dissolved by the enzymes and acids of the stomach, it all moves into what is called the *small intestine*. Although it is actually 20 feet or more long, this long, tubular passage fits into a small area in a series of closely overlapping coils. How wonderfully God has designed all the parts of the body!

The upper part of this organ is called the *duodenum*. Its job includes neutralizing the highly acidic material coming from the stomach for the rest of the digestive system to handle. The *pancreas*, nearby, helps by sending along other fluids, as does the *liver*, which also has numerous other duties.

After more thorough breaking down in this part of the body, the food continues downward in the small intestine where complete and final digestion takes place. It is here that vital amino acids are made

from the proteins that are found in the food we eat. Tiny blood and lymph vessels in the walls of the small intestine can now absorb this food. They carry it to the liver, where final refining takes place. Blood is enriched there with protein molecules, glucose, amino acids and other components, and then it goes into the general circulatory system. All of the cells of the body are fed with this nutritious product.

What's left of the food, having now yielded up its storehouse of nutrition, passes into the large intestine, the *colon*. There is now nothing left but waste, and when this has been eliminated from the body, the entire process has been completed as far as these organs are concerned.

Isn't it remarkable how these complex parts of the body process the food we have eaten? They all work automatically, helping each other, but never getting in the way of one another. **Only God could create such a plan, put it into operation, and have it continue day after day**, keeping the body alive and active, sometimes longer than 100 years.

Food that we eat takes care of our needs for a little while. But Christ is our heavenly food, and He gives *eternal* life to any who come to Him, willing to admit they are sinners and to accept Him as their Savior and Lord. The prophet Jeremiah said, “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart” (Jeremiah 15:16). Has this been your experience?

Did You Know?

The small intestine is 20 feet or more long.

