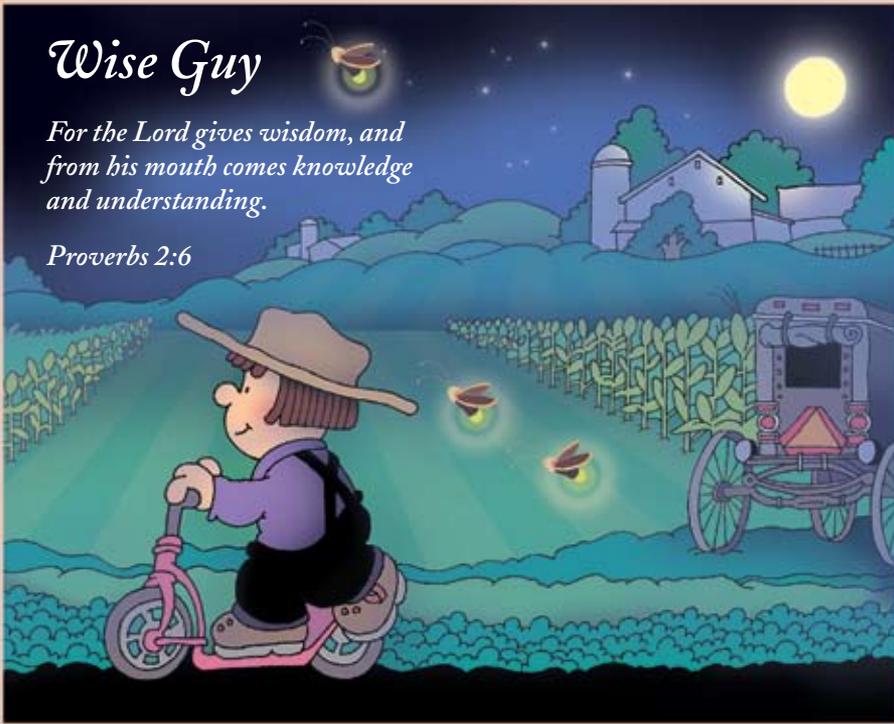


Wise Guy

*For the Lord gives wisdom, and
from his mouth comes knowledge
and understanding.*

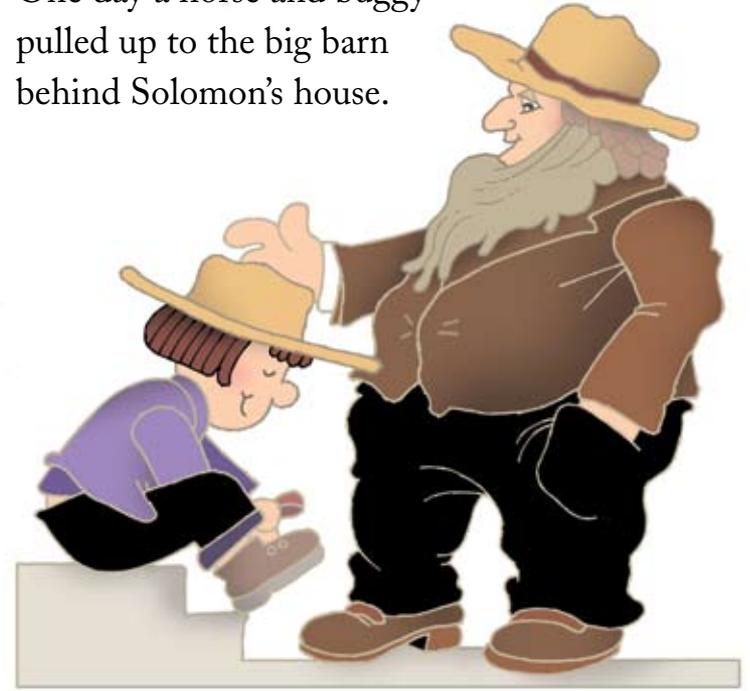
Proverbs 2:6



Solomon Lapp was a very smart boy. He always got the best grades in school. He fed the cows faster than his five brothers. He gathered eggs quicker than his three sisters. He caught more fireflies than his ten cousins. Even Solomon's friends thought he was smart.

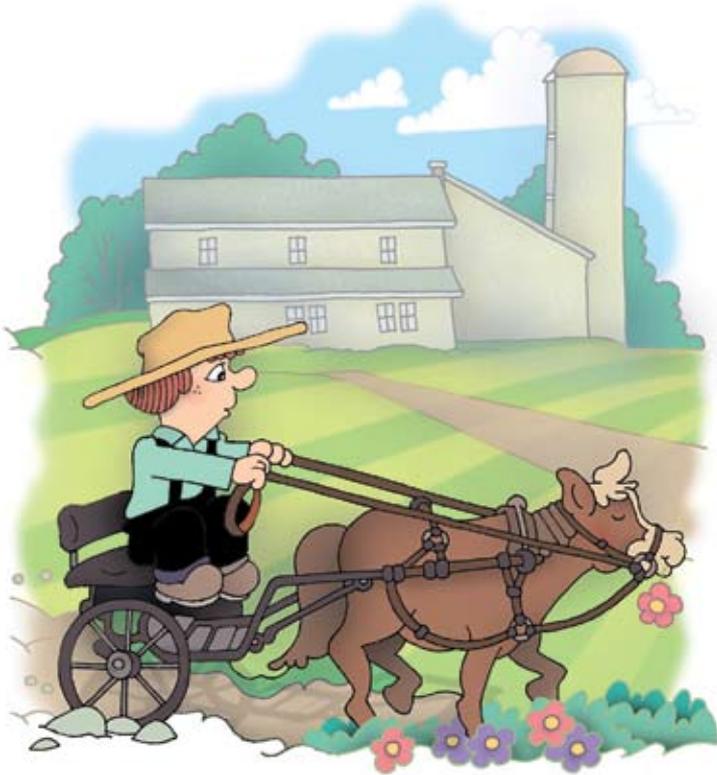


One day a horse and buggy pulled up to the big barn behind Solomon's house.

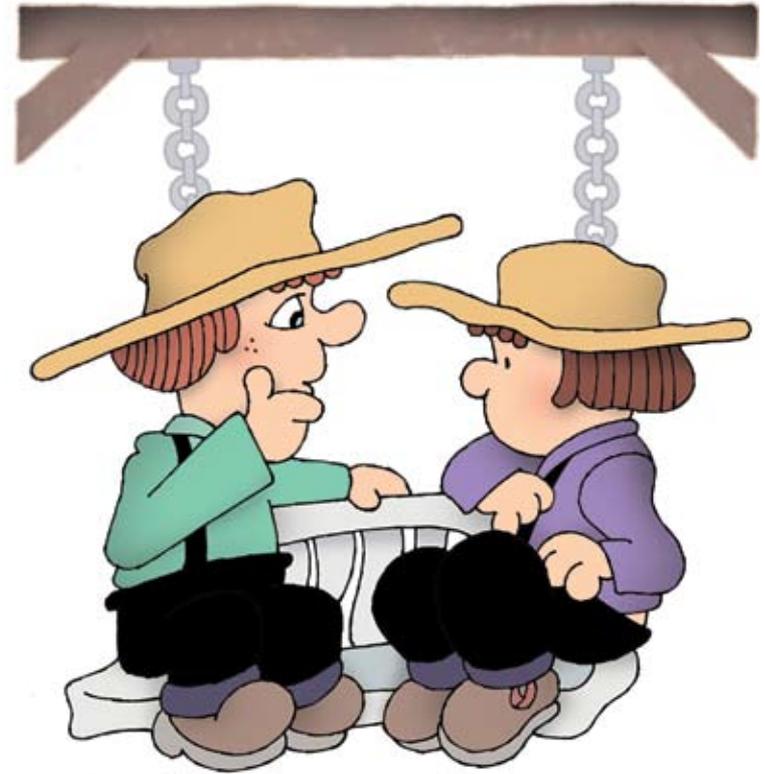


Uncle Noah, a minister in the church, climbed down from the buggy. He patted Solomon's head and said, "Remember, it's the Lord who gives wisdom. Before giving advice, it's best to pray and ask God for wisdom." "I'll remember," Solomon said with a nod.

Later that day, Solomon's friend,
Willie King, came by in his pony cart.



“I’ve got a problem. Since you’re so *schmaert* [smart], I hope you can help,” Willie said when he joined Solomon in the swing on his front porch. Solomon smiled. “Please, tell me about it.”

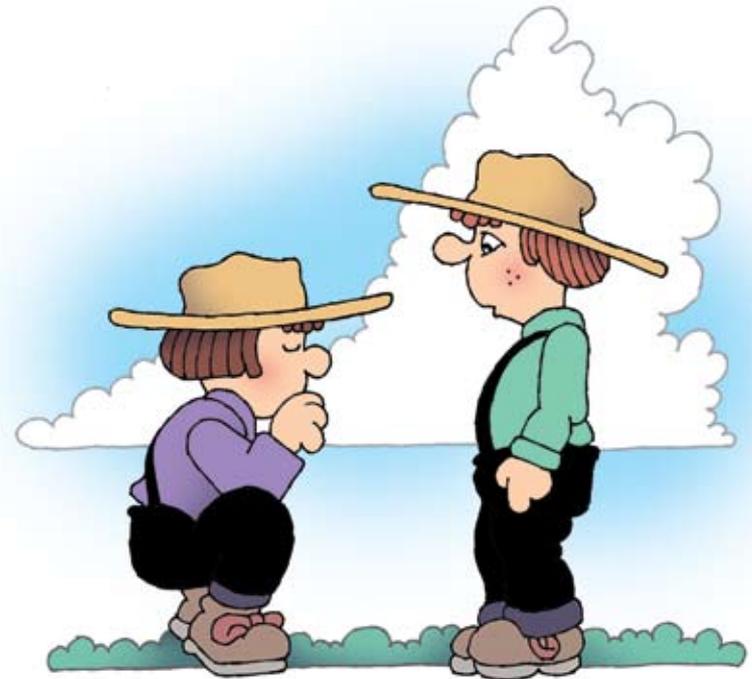


Willie rubbed his chin and puckered his brow. “I’ve been trying to teach my dog, Sam, some tricks. But Sam sits and begs when I say, ‘Roll over.’ And he rolls over on his back when I say, ‘Sit!’ Do you know what I can do?”

Solomon scratched the side of his head as he thought. “*Jah* [yes], I know just what you can do!”

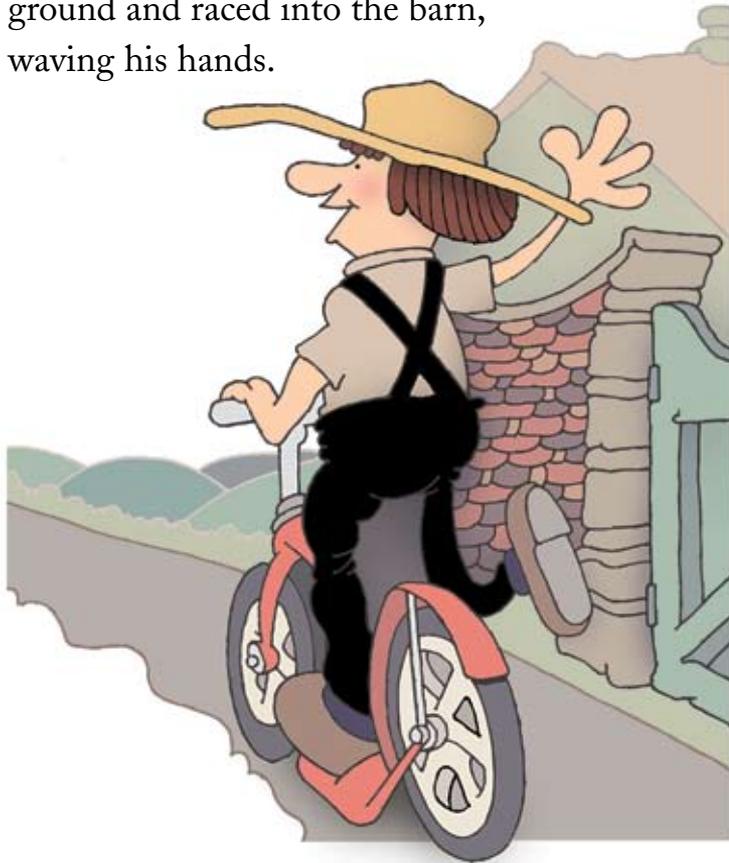


Solomon jumped up and ran into the yard. “When you want the dog to roll over, roll on the ground.” Solomon dropped to the grass and rolled one way, and then another.

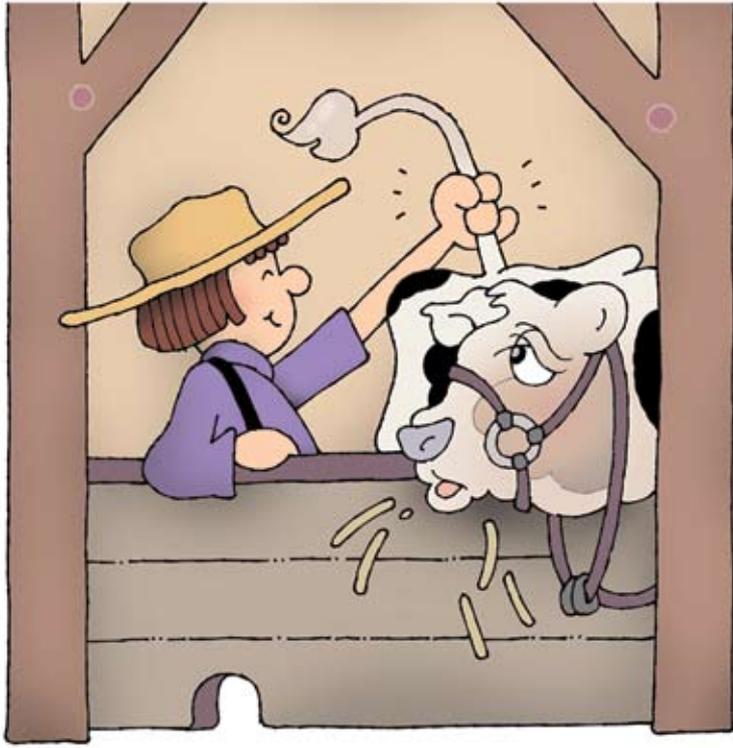


“When you want the dog to sit, you do like this.” Solomon put both feet together, took a squatting pose, and held his hands in front of his chest. “*Danki* [thanks], Solomon. I’ll give it a try!” Willie climbed into his pony cart and left for home.

Solomon went to the barn to do his chores. A few minutes later, he heard someone whistling. Solomon looked out the barn door and spotted his friend John Mast riding in on a scooter. John dropped the scooter to the ground and raced into the barn, waving his hands.



“I came because I need your advice,” John said as he flopped onto a bale of straw. Solomon took a seat beside his friend. “What’s the problem?” “One of our cows gets nervous when it’s time to milk,” said John. “She fusses and twitches her tail. What should I do?”

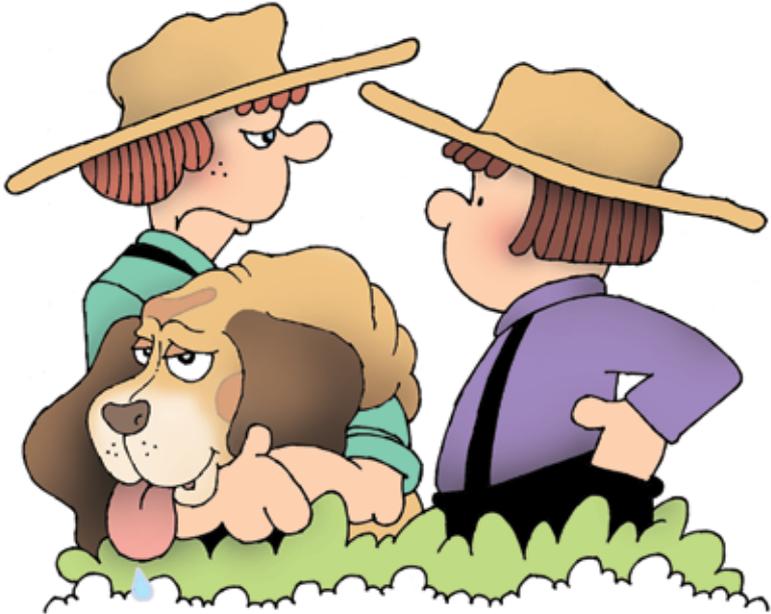


“Follow me!” Solomon led John into a stall where a black and white cow stood chewing its cud. “If your cow gets nervous when it’s time to milk, this is what you should do.” Solomon grabbed the cow’s tail and gave it a pull. “Danki,” John said with a nod.

As Solomon followed John out of the barn, he decided it felt good to be so smart. He was glad he could help two of his friends. In fact, Solomon felt so pleased with his wisdom he reached around and gave himself a pat on the back.

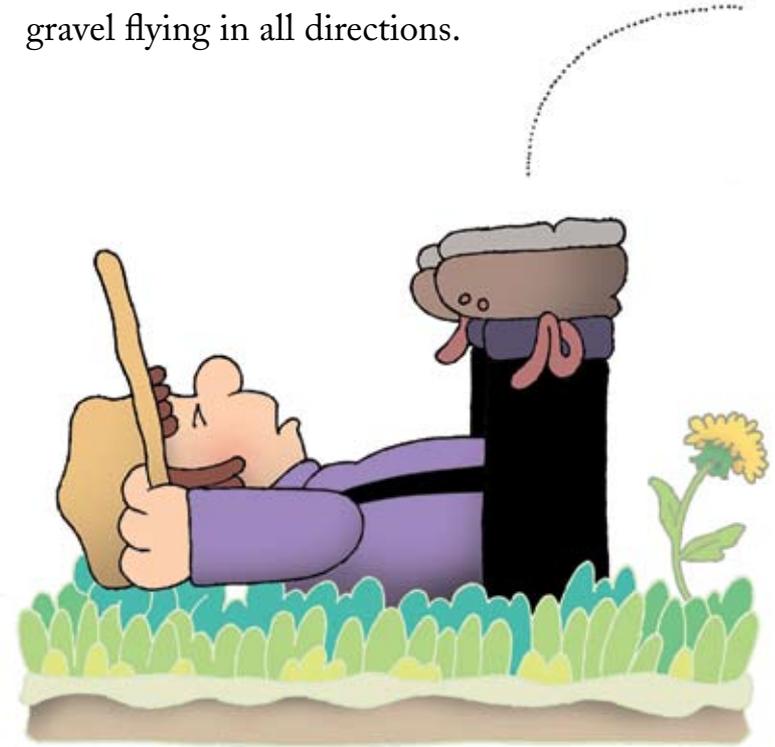


The next day, Willie came to see Solomon again. “How did things go with your dog?” Solomon asked. Willie frowned.



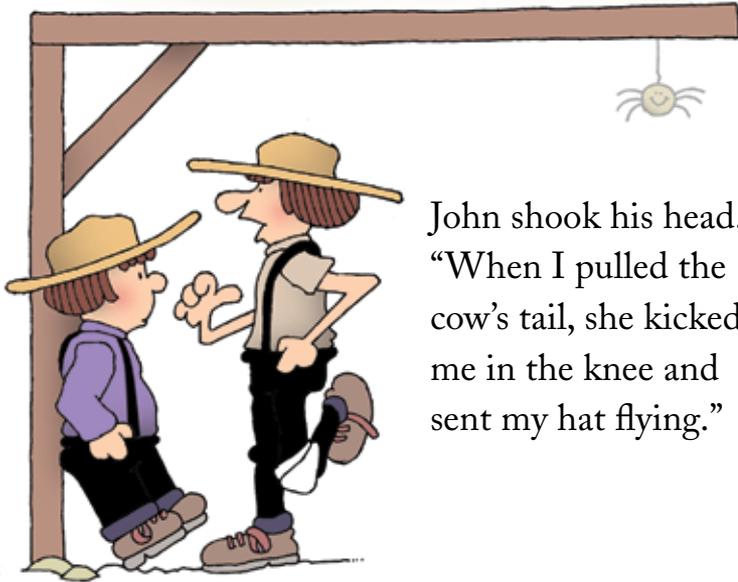
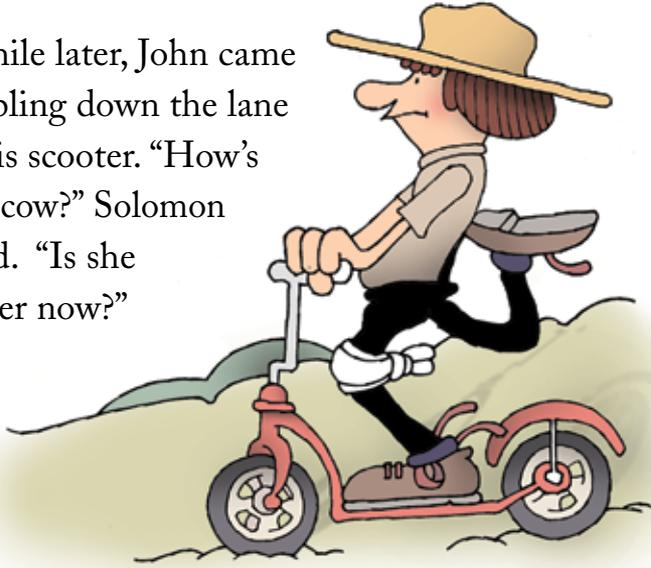
“When I rolled on the grass, the dog licked my face. When I sat up and begged, the dog brought me a bone!” Willie grunted. “You gave me bad advice.”

Willie climbed into his pony cart and took off down the road, sending gravel flying in all directions.



Solomon flopped onto the grass with a moan. “Oh, fizzle! What could have gone wrong?”

A while later, John came wobbling down the lane on his scooter. “How’s your cow?” Solomon asked. “Is she calmer now?”



John shook his head. “When I pulled the cow’s tail, she kicked me in the knee and sent my hat flying.”

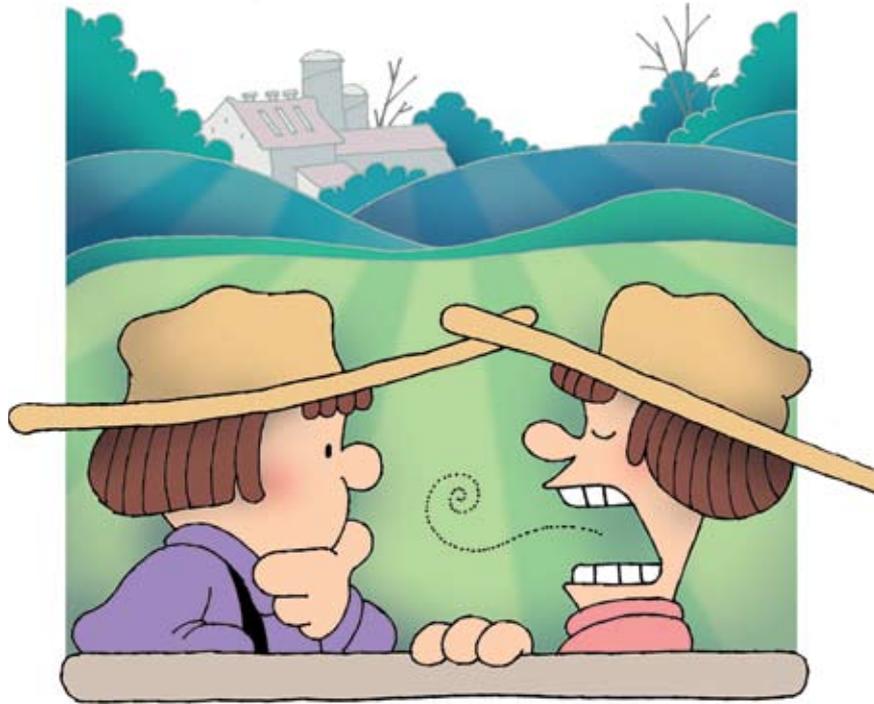


John limped back to his scooter and rode away, mumbling, “I’ll never ask your advice again.” Solomon kicked a stone with the toe of his boot and headed for the house. “Maybe I need to think harder the next time someone wants my advice.”

On Saturday, after Solomon's chores were done, he decided to play in the yard. "Do you want to jump on the trampoline with me?" Solomon asked his sister, Sara. Sara nodded and gave Solomon a big grin. "Me first!" she shouted as she raced for the trampoline.

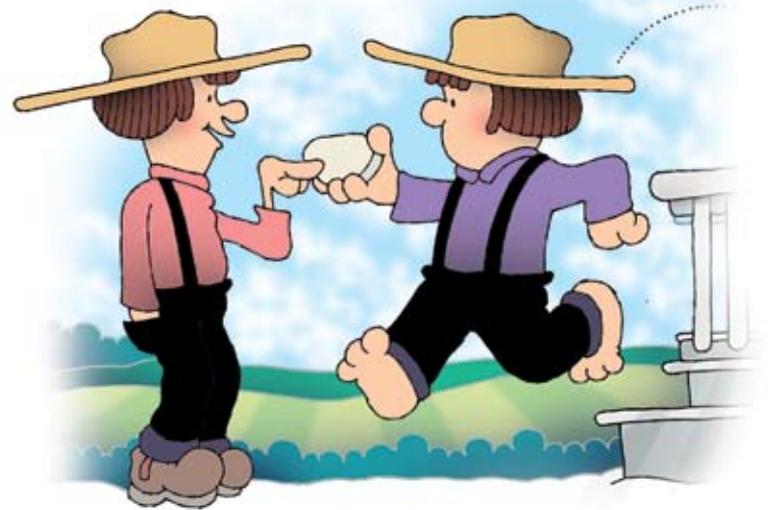


Solomon and Sara took turns jumping; then they jumped together. Solomon stopped jumping when he saw his cousin, Abe, come into the yard. "Would you like to jump on our trampoline?" he called to Abe. Abe shook his head. "I can't stay long. I came to ask you a question."



Solomon climbed off the trampoline, but Sara kept jumping. “What’s your question?” Solomon asked Abe. “I went to the dentist the other day, and he said I’m not getting my teeth clean enough.” Abe opened his mouth real wide. “What do you think I should do, Solomon?”

Solomon smiled. “I’ll be right back!” He raced into the house and returned with a bar of soap.

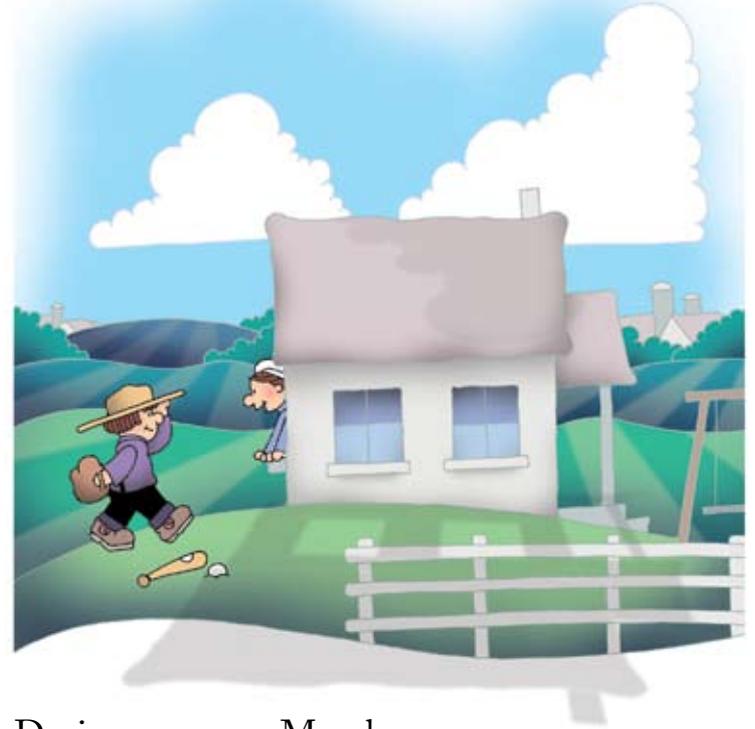


“What’s that for?” asked Abe. “Whenever I don’t get my hands clean enough,” said Solomon, “Mom tells me to use more soap.” “Danki!” Abe took the soap and headed for home.



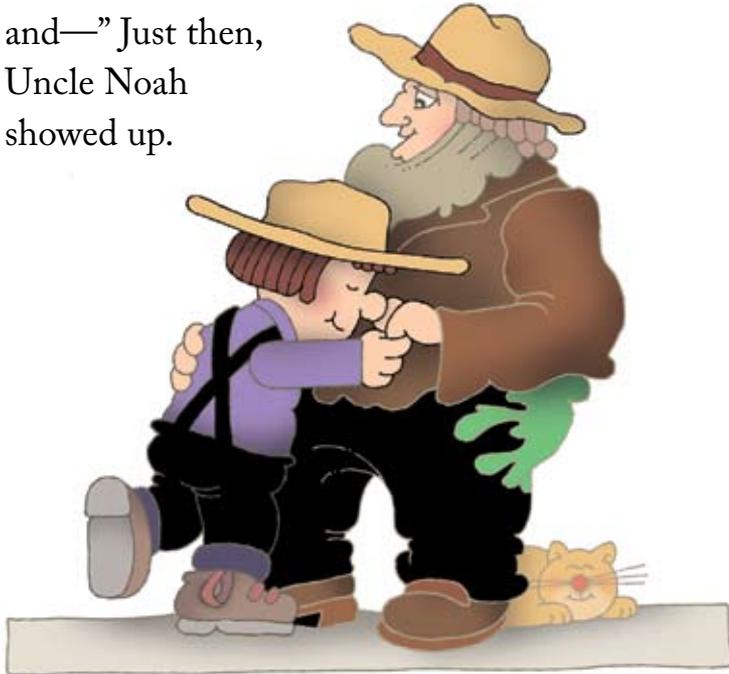


On Sunday before church started,
Abe returned the bar of soap to Solomon.
“Keep your soap,” he said with a grunt.
“And keep your advice!” “What happened?”
Solomon asked. “Didn’t the soap get your
teeth clean?” “It tasted awful.” Abe frowned.
“And thanks to your *dumm* [dumb] idea,
I’ve been blowing bubbles all morning!”



During recess on Monday,
Solomon was playing ball. “I’ve got a problem,”
Becky Yoder called. “Can you help?” “What’s
the problem?” asked Solomon. “I have two
cats that look alike. How can I tell them apart?”
Solomon tipped his straw hat and grinned.
“That’s easy. Put green paint on one of their
tails!” Becky smiled. “Danki, Solomon!”

“How are your cats?” Solomon asked Becky the next day. She frowned. “I put green paint on one cat’s tail, and—” Just then, Uncle Noah showed up.



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The seat of his buggy was covered with green paint. So were Uncle Noah’s pants! “Remember Solomon,” said Uncle Noah, “before giving advice, it’s best to pray and ask God for wisdom.”