

Good News Daily

February 19-25, 2017

Sunday, February 19

Isaiah 66:7-14 For thus says the Lord: Behold I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream... (v.12a AMP)

Even though it is plain to see that historically absence of conflict hasn't been true for Jerusalem, this promised peace flowing like a river is available to its inhabitants and to us as believers in Jesus Christ (Prince of Peace). Peace is not the absence of conflict but solid calm and assurance of his presence in the midst of conflict. Jesus knows the path of peace through every challenging situation in my life. Knowing the Good Shepherd and recognizing his voice gives me a solid connection with the one who knows my heart and the hearts of all the others in my life. The thief cannot steal, kill, or destroy my peace unless I allow him to. As I am writing this, conflict and violence are being reported in the US and many other countries.

Lord, please help us to keep our attention fixed firmly on You and the offering of your peace as we pray for our sisters and brothers around the world.

Psalm 118; 1 John 3:4-10; John 10:7-16

Birthdays: Carol Ireland-Johnson and Peta-Gaye McCarthy

Anniversaries: None

Monday, February 20

Ruth 1:1-14 But on the way, Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back to your mothers' homes. And may the LORD reward you for your kindness to your husbands and to me. May the LORD bless you with the security of another marriage." Then she kissed them good-bye, and they all broke down and wept. (vv.8-9 NLT)

Today as I reflect on this passage from the book of Ruth, appreciation for the priceless gift of friendship comes to my mind. I have had many friends over the years that have stayed beside me in some very trying circumstances. Challenges test us and our relationships, but God's Word says, "When troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy" (James 1:2).

Wow! That's a lot to ask, isn't it? Consider how impossible that is without the Spirit of God living within us. Thank you, Holy Spirit for being available with all your power 24/7 to make relationship with you possible. Thank you that the same power is available in all our relationships, whether others choose to stay or go, you remain. You are constant, unchanging, always there. You never, ever leave us. Now that brings me joy! How about you?

Psalm 106:1-18; 2 Corinthians 1:1-11; Matthew 5:1-12

Birthdays: Edna Jones

Anniversaries: None

Tuesday, February 21

Ruth 1:15-22 But Ruth replied, "Don't ask me to leave you and turn back. Wherever you go I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God." (v.16)

This verse goes beyond faithful friendship. They are desperate for resources. Literally they will starve if they don't leave their present location. In a spiritual sense, Ruth may have recognized her desperate hunger for this mother relationship and even a deeper hunger to know Naomi's God. Even though it is a long distance from Moab to Bethlehem (which means "house of bread") and she has been gone a long time, Naomi has not forgotten the way back to her God. Because of the Holy Spirit's reminder in this story, I am aware that I often lose my way and, thanks be to God by the power of His Spirit within, my heart knows the way back. Back to reliance on God's provision for my life. Yes, tired of trying things my way I return to my Jesus who knows everything I need (love, peace, joy) and is ready to provide it in abundance. Because of God's abundant provision Naomi's family, who once had nothing, is now privileged to be in the lineage of Jesus Christ. This story encourages me to celebrate my position, and yours, in God's family.

Psalms 120, 121, 122, 123; 2 Corinthians 1:12-22; Matthew 5:13-20

Birthdays: Marlyn Bajon, Cynthia Braaf, George Chang, Jr., B.J. McConnell and Jedidiah McDaniel

Anniversaries: None

Wednesday, February 22

Matthew 5:21-26 "You have heard that our ancestors were told, 'You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.' But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell." (v.21-22)

What a very serious word from Jesus today! It is true to say that I am not a murderer, but earlier in my life I had anger that continued over long periods of time. It was very strong anger and could have ended in harm to myself and others. When disappointment gripped my life, I got stuck in anger and did not have the skill to return to joy and peace. I confessed it as sin, which was the right thing to do, but that still didn't bring me back.

Then I learned that we can, by the power of the Holy Spirit, locate roots to our emotional pain. Children's unmet needs can produce anger that lasts for years and becomes "triggered" every time current needs aren't met. When I received healing in those areas of deep pain, my anger was absorbed by the God who loves me. He then replaced it with peace and joy. I will be forever grateful!

Jesus, you know how much I need you every moment. Thank you for always being there for me, just as you promised.

Ruth 2:1-13; Psalm 119:145-176; 2 Corinthians 1:23—2:17

Birthdays: Andrew Cuddihy, Giovanni D'Angelo, Gabrielle Guy, Cornelius McLymont and Peter Sterling

Anniversaries: None

Thursday, February 23

Psalm 131 Instead, I have calmed and quieted myself, like a weaned child that no longer cries for its mother's milk. Yes, like a weaned child is my soul within me. (v.2)

Calming and quieting myself is something I have practiced for several years. Yes, practiced. I know that Jesus is our peace and my spirit has received that peace, but my mind and body often fail to get with the program. My mind can replay an event, either real or imagined, over and over again. The emotional response (fear, shame, sadness, anger) the event stirs up gets stuck in my body and causes stress and tension, which is often difficult to release. But the real question is, "Why do I want to be calm and quiet?" I want to be calm and quiet so that I can perceive the "whisper" of the Holy Spirit's nudges. What a great privilege it is to worship a God who communicates with us through His written Word and by the inner inspiration of His Holy Spirit. Lord Jesus, thank you so much for making that possible.

Ruth 2:14-23; Psalms 132, 133; 2 Corinthians 3:1-18; Matthew 5:27-37

Birthdays: Amy Henderson and John Reynolds

Anniversaries: None

Friday, February 24

Ruth 3:1-18 "Who are you?" he asked. "I am your servant Ruth," she replied. "Spread the corner of your covering over me, for you are my family redeemer." (v.9)

If you've been following this Old Testament story with me this week you know that the widow Ruth has left her homeland to accompany Naomi as she returns to Bethlehem. Ruth gleans grain in Boaz's fields so they will not starve. Boaz, the owner of the fields and a relative of Naomi's, notices Ruth's beauty and faithfulness. As a relative, Boaz has the legal right to purchase property that once belonged to Naomi's family. The right and privilege to restore the family fortune is what a redeemer is all about.

Jesus, our promised Redeemer, can restore our lives. He died so that all I have lost can be returned to me. Remember that Satan, our enemy, has come to steal, kill, and destroy all the kingdom benefits God has planned for us. Therefore, just as Ruth received Boaz's protective covering over herself, I will receive Jesus as Redeemer. I can make my need known, then rest knowing my Redeemer has it under control.

Psalms 140, 142; 2 Corinthians 4:1-12; Matthew 5:38-48

Birthdays: Cheryl Kiehaber, David Morris, John Steinbauer and Monique Vaz

Anniversaries: None

Saturday, February 25

Matthew 6:1-16 Pray, therefore, like this: Our Father Who is in heaven, hallowed (kept holy) be Your name. (v.9 AMP)

Jesus is teaching us a model for prayer in these verses. For me it sounds like this: Holy Abba Father, Your Name is lifted high above every other name in my life. You are more important than any other dream, desire, relationship, or thing. I need Your kingdom of love and grace right here, right now. Father, I am trusting in You for every need (spiritual, emotional, physical) of this day. Lord, please forgive me for all the ways I have not followed You, as I now release from my judgement all those who have sinned against me. Thank you, Lord Jesus, that you have the power to forgive me. I release all bitterness and resentment that I have stored up. Please protect me from the evil one who is prowling around my life waiting to destroy me, my family, and my friends. Lord, your power is far greater than the evil one. Your kingdom will last forever, your love never fails and I will live with you for eternity because of what you accomplished on the cross for me.

Almighty God, You have given me the grace to live in each precious moment today, celebrating the joy and freedom my salvation brings. I rejoice in Your mighty love!

Ruth 4:1-17; Psalm 137; 2 Corinthians 4:13—5:10

Birthdays: Amaya Bromfield, Shannon Lightburne and Elise Roy

Anniversaries: Phillipa & Winston Norman

by Charlene Laird

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