

Good News Daily

July 16-22, 2017

Sunday, July 16

Psalm 150 *Let everything that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.* (v.6 KJV)

Back in the year 2000, my wife and I joined my sister, my brother, and a Catholic group of their church friends from Arkansas on a trip to Italy. The occasion was both the celebration of one of their priest's 50 years of ministry and the traditional Jewish 50th year of Jubilee.

Personally, as a veterinarian, visiting Assisi was a highlight of the trip for me. Being in the homeland of St. Francis, patron saint of the animals, was inspirational. As a memory of the occasion, I brought back a cross from his cathedral which is displayed in our home. The prayer of praise on the cross is the Canticum of the Creatures. In his prayer, St. Francis thanks God for brother sun, brother wind, sister water, brother fire, sister earth and all creatures and, finally, sister bodily death. In my studies of St. Francis, I found out he was the original conservationist, a great world evangelical, and a gifted animal communicator.

This past year I celebrated my own fifty years of being an animal doctor. I've learned so many things from God's creatures and His creation. My clients and their pets have taught me much about God's unconditional love.

1 Samuel 17:50—18:4; Psalms 148, 149; Romans 10:4-17; Matthew 23:29-39

Birthdays: Joyann Burgess, Luc Dussuau, Keith Ellis and Raymond Seow, Sr.

Anniversaries: Craig & Sherri Neita

Monday, July 17

1 Samuel 18:5-16, 27b-30 *And Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul.* (v.12)

Ever since a trip we took to Israel in 2014, now when I read my Bible, it reminds me of places we visited in the Holy Land. In today's Scripture, I think back to when our group visited a beautiful oasis called Ein Gedi with its waterfalls and a stream flowing between the mountains in the middle of the desert near the Dead Sea. This is the place where David had been hiding in a cave from Saul, who wanted to kill him.

In this story of relationships between Saul and David and Saul's son Jonathan and David, I believe we can learn lessons for our own relationship with God. First, due to disobedience in serving God, God's spirit departed from King Saul and an evil spirit of jealousy came upon him. Also, the friendship of Jonathan and David was described as one where Jonathan "loved him as his own soul" (v.1). Saul's broken relationship with God was his failure to live out Jesus' message of the first

commandment—to love the Lord with all our heart and soul. Jonathan fulfilled the second commandment to love others as ourselves. The Bible seems to remind me there is little new in the world, it's all the old retold.

Psalm 25; Acts 11:19-30; Mark 1:29-45

Birthdays: Robert Chang, Alexander Chin, Sebastian Taylor and Lionel Vilsaint

Anniversaries: None

Tuesday, July 18

1 Samuel 19:1-18 *And Saul spoke to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David.* (v.1)

As I write this it's Holy Week, actually Maundy Thursday. God seems to be pointing me to write more about family relationships like Saul, David, and Jonathan. It's been a tough time for my wife and I the past few years with both our son and daughter getting divorces after the stress of military marriages. Both of them came back home to live with us, along with two grandchildren. Sound familiar to anyone?

This morning, I attended the YMCA annual prayer breakfast and listened to Elizabeth Smart, author of the book *My Story*, describe how her faith in God and her mother's promise to always love her sustained her after being kidnapped at age 14 and living nine months in slavery. She gave thanks to the thousands who prayed for her during the long national search and subsequent trial for her abductors.

Over my lifetime, some of my hardest struggles have been dealing with family relationships. Intercessory prayer for God's will to be done for us is always our best answer.

Psalms 26, 28; Acts 12:1-17; Mark 2:1-12

Birthdays: Andrew Nachtwey

Anniversaries: Vincent & Gloria Lacamita

Wednesday, July 19

Acts 12:18-25 *Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter.* (v.18)

An angel came to Peter and removed his chains and released him from Herod's prison. Sounds like a miracle to me. This Easter, my wife and I went to the movie *Miracles from Heaven*, the true story of a miraculous healing of a young girl with an incurable disease. Doctors had no explanation. The faith and prayers of the church were answered for the believers.

I have been witness to two important life changing miracles in my life. The first was a miracle for my 2-year-old son who was brought back to life after a swimming pool accident and the second was my opportunity to become a veterinarian. In both events, they were the answer to prayer like what happened in Peter's case. I'm sure you, too, can cite instances of God's miracles in your own life that strengthened your faith.

1 Samuel 20:1-23; Psalm 38; Mark 2:13-22

Birthdays: Norm Carroll, Liberty D'Angelo and Akielya Simon

Anniversaries: None

Thursday, July 20

Acts 13:1-12 *And they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabus and Saul for the work unto which I have called them. (v.2)*

As the early church began their first missionary journey, they prayed and were set apart by the Holy Spirit. Many years ago, I read a book about the Holy Spirit's influence on a church out west called *Nine O'clock in the Morning*.

You will recall outsiders thought the disciples were drunk when they spoke in many tongues at Pentecost. It was also explained by Peter in his sermon that young men would see visions and dream dreams. In Dennis Bennet's book, he recounts the same experiences of the Holy Spirit in his church.

During my lifetime, I've experienced these Holy Spirit events on two occasions. The first was a movement called Faith Alive, where people from other churches witnessed and shared their faith by visiting our church. Following that event, we were greatly inspired to bring others to church and share our faith. Another revival event was Cursillo. These weekend retreats, and the follow up "groupings" by attendees, were faith-building experiences. I continue to wear my Cursillo cross around my neck to remind me how "Christ is counting on you." In these difficult times, we need a renewed outpouring of God's Spirit.

1 Samuel 20:24-42; Psalm 37:1-18; Mark 2:23—3:6

Birthdays: David Bacon, Myriam Cook and Anais Palmer

Anniversaries: None

Friday, July 21

Acts 13:13-25 *Of this man's seed (David's) hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus. (v.23)*

This week many of my Scriptures have been about King David and he's one of my favorite superheroes in the Bible. I like him not only because God said he was "a man after God's own heart" and was an ancestor of Jesus, but because he was very human. I am encouraged that, like me, he fell to temptations of life such as his affair with Bathsheba and his conflict with King Saul, but overcame life's obstacles with his faith in God.

I love his psalms of praise and prayers which remind me to "be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord."

1 Samuel 21:1-15; Psalm 31; Mark 3:7-19a

Birthdays: David Bailey Jr., Simone Champagnie, Veneita Dempster and Carlos Larrazabal

Anniversaries: None

Saturday, July 22

Acts 13:26-43 *For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption; But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. (vv.36-37)*

As a prophet in the Book of Psalms, David foretells the resurrection of the King, the Messiah, at some time subsequent to his death and resurrection. In other words, Jesus would assume the Davidic throne.

So now as I complete my Easter week of study and writing, two themes seem to be apparent. Death and resurrection. My wife is preparing for our church to have a pastoral teaching on "the conversation." This is featuring a subject that families choose not to want to talk about with their older family members. The conversation of a plan for earthly end of life—death. Like a preacher said in yesterday's homily, we plan for every other event—baptisms, weddings, confirmations, etc.—but are hesitant to discuss with our loved ones how we want to die.

Many years ago, a deacon in our church suggested I prepare for my Resurrection service by listing the music, Scriptures, etc. that I wanted to be used. As a Christian, we are assured it will be a hopeful, joyous celebration with thanksgiving for our earthly life and a promise of an uncorrupted life to come—like Jesus and David.

1 Samuel 22:1-23; Psalms 30, 32; Mark 3:19b-35

Birthdays: Nicolas D'Esposito, Luke Scott and Tricia Williams-Cepada

Anniversaries: Mr. & Mrs. Tyson Jones and Terri-Ann King

by R. Bruce Keene

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