

Good News Daily

Psalm 106:1-18; Acts 22:30—23:11; Mark 11:12-26

August 20-26, 2017

Sunday, August 20

John 5:30-47 *"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life. I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him."* (vv.39-40, 43-44 NASB)

The date was June 1, 1967; the time was evening; the location was a college dormitory. I was alone and sitting on the bed, disinterestedly reading my Bible. As I was skimming through John 5, words from that chapter stood out to me on stems as if they were being displayed in 3-D.

I knew the words that I read were true: my life was characterized by a mixture of incompatible values and practices; while I attended church and sometimes read God's Word, I did not walk in relationship with God. On the one hand, I was committed to dysfunctional friends, who had lured me into relationships and practices that were not healthy; on the other hand, I was experiencing a feeble, yet growing, response to God who had been offering me the opportunity to walk in relationship with Him.

That evening I made a commitment to receive the testimony of the Scriptures and to receive life from Jesus Christ, the one who came in his Father's name. That night I experienced a new beginning.

2 Samuel 17:1-23; Psalm 118; Galatians 3:6-14

Birthdays: Edward Decker, Jessie Gilley, Alvin Hanson and Barbara McKenzie

Anniversaries: None

Monday, August 21

2 Samuel 17:24—18:8 *The battle raged all across the countryside, and more men died because of the forest than were killed by the sword.* (v.8 NLT)

When I read this passage, I thought about me running hurriedly through a forest of tall pine trees that were growing every which way in no evident order. I dodged one tree only to encounter another; my feet tripped on bushes as I continued in haste to reach a safe destination. I did not know how to make my way through the forest and it looked like I would never get out; I felt overwhelmed.

As I reflected on these thoughts, I recognized that I had been trying to rush through a long to-do list in the same way that I had been rushing through the forest. Each time I tried to decide what to do next I battled feelings of confusion and jumped from one item to another. In desperation I cried out to the Lord. With the Lord's help, a path began to emerge. I walked calmly and victoriously on the path as I traveled to my destination. I did not succumb to the forest.

Thank You, Lord, for rescuing me.

Birthdays: None

Anniversaries: None

Tuesday, August 22

Psalm 123 *I lift my eyes to you, O God, enthroned in heaven. We keep looking to the LORD our God for his mercy, just as servants keep their eyes on their master, as a slave girl watches her mistress for the slightest signal.* (vv.1-2)

The lyrics to a familiar hymn by Charles Wesley begin with this question: "Depth of mercy! Can there be mercy still reserved for me?"

When people have treated me contemptuously or have castigated me unjustly on the basis of their feelings of anger and their indignant thoughts, my response is to call out to God for mercy for myself: "Have mercy on *me*, Lord, for *I* have had *my* fill of contempt." Yet even as I cry out to God, I wonder about the other persons. Do I not want the Lord to show mercy to them, even if they have treated me unfairly? Perhaps those who were so unkind to me will also begin to cry out to God and ask for His mercy.

O merciful God, we lift our eyes to You. Please help us love our enemies and extend mercy to those who have been unkind. Help us to treat others in the way that we would like them to treat us.

2 Samuel 18:9-18; Psalms 120, 121, 122; Acts 23:12-24; Mark 11:27—12:12

Birthdays: Linda Millar and Phillip Norman

Anniversaries: Noel Smith & Beverley Morris-Smith

Wednesday, August 23

Psalm 119:145-176 *I stay awake through the night, thinking about your promise...Argue my case; take my side! Protect my life as you promised...O LORD, listen to my cry; give me the discerning mind you promised...Listen to my prayer; rescue me as you promised.* (vv.148, 154, 169, 170)

But you promised! You promised! You promised me you would do that! These words remind me of children reminding their parents—not once, not twice, but repeatedly—about something the parents said they would do. The question lurking behind the children's persistent words is this: Will my parents follow-through on their promises?

The psalmist is approaching God in a similar persistent way. The psalmist feeds on the memory of God's promise; calls out for protection; begs for understanding; asks for rescue. Motivating the many persistent words is the question: Will God follow-through on His promises?

The psalmist's words prompt me to remember that God is always available to hear my cry: He will not leave me alone; He will not abandon me to the enemy; He will not allow me to be bereft of understanding. When there is a cry in my heart, God will hear and answer; God can be trusted.

Lord God, thank You for promises that You have made to us. I believe You will do whatever You have promised to do; I accept Your word.

2 Samuel 18:19-23; Acts 23:23-35; Mark 12:13-27

Birthdays: Herbert Germaine and Nicole Robbins

Anniversaries: None

Thursday, August 24

2 Samuel 19:1-23 *As all the people heard of the king's deep grief for his son, the joy of that day's victory was turned into deep sadness. They crept back into the town that day as though they were ashamed and had deserted in battle.* (vv.2-3)

How are we to respond when victory is associated with a heartbreaking event for another person? How are we to respond when grief over a heartbreaking event is associated with another person's occasion for rejoicing? How do we find direction in these times of heightened emotions? When we are overcome by our own feelings we often find it difficult to think of the other person first.

Strong emotions can threaten to be overwhelming. When our feelings are in full swing we may have difficulty quieting ourselves. Are we able to consider the plight of others and also walk in a place of peace—without abandoning the reality of our own experience? How can we see and respond from God's perspective, so that we receive His peace and communicate it to others?

Lord, please help us love one another as You have loved us. Please open our eyes to see people and situations as You see them; please give us the ability to share in Your feelings towards them.

Psalms 131, 132, 133; Acts 24:1-23; Mark 12:28-34

Birthdays: Steven Archer, Laura Benson, Daphne Campbell, Beulah Francis and Katrina Rose

Anniversaries: None

Friday, August 25

2 Samuel 19:24-43 *Then the men of Israel answered the men of Judah. We have ten [tribes'] shares in the king; and we have more right to David than you have.* (v.43a-b AMP)

I remember times when I have experienced strong feelings of frustration, anger, and indignation toward another person. The other person did something that I did not like; they did not do it the way I thought it should have been done. I was of the opinion that my perspective was correct and theirs was not; I evaluated myself as being superior to the other person; my perception of the overall context was flawed.

During those times, I felt overwhelmed and did not know what to do; I did not know which way to turn. When I looked for help, the help for which I desperately sought did not seem to be available. Then I remembered that God is always my place of refuge: I cried out to God; He repaired my flawed perception; He helped me to work with others even though we viewed things differently.

Good and gracious God, You alone knew the way I should turn. Thank You for setting me free.

Psalms 140, 142; Acts 24:24—25:12; Mark 12:35-44

Birthdays: Andrea Facey and Kim Stokes

Anniversaries: None

Saturday, August 26

Psalm 144 *Reach down from heaven and rescue me; rescue me from deep waters, from the power of my enemies. Their mouths are full of lies; they swear to tell the truth, but they lie instead.* (vv.7-8 NLT)

I recognize that my worst enemy can be myself; I have been amazed by the power of the enemy who is me. I do not always encourage myself in the LORD. I sometimes allow myself to be encompassed by deep waters. Sometimes it is easier to allow myself to be tossed about in an ocean of falsehood than it is to swim strongly against the current to reach a point of victory, and I neglect the speaking of truth.

When I read David's psalm, I experience feelings of hope: God loves us; He pays attention to us; He enables us to be victorious in battle; He nourishes us, causes us to flourish, and motivates us to rejoice in community with others whose God is the LORD.

Heavenly Father, please help all of us to focus on You, especially in times when we are tempted to sink into the depths. Help us to speak truth that dispels falsehood; please help us to remember and to confess who You are and what You are like.

2 Samuel 23:1-7, 13-17; Psalm 137; Acts 25:13-27; Mark 13:1-13

Birthdays: Marcella Gregory, Leo Mitchell, Elizabeth Rhoden-Sherlock, Beverley Spaulding, Ian Superville, Jr. and Jennifer Tromans

Anniversaries: Simeon & Maureen Roach

by Elizabeth Ann Franks

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