

NICU. Jesus is Mediator and Advocate: he listened to all involved in a family conflict, gave us his perspective, and made a way for each of us to repent, ask for forgiveness, and speak the truth in love with God's help. Who do *you* say Jesus is?

2 Samuel 5:1-12; Psalm 69; Acts 17:1-15

### **Saturday, August 2**

Psalm 75 *We give thanks to you, O God, we give thanks, for your Name is near; men tell of your wonderful deeds. You say, "I choose the appointed time; it is I who judge uprightly."* (vv.1-2)

As times pass, waiting on God's promises gets easier for me. "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." (Ecclesiastes 3:1). So, God appoints the time; we wait. How? Only with God's help, I know. "God is our refuge and our strength, an ever present in times of trouble." (Psalm 46:1). Putting on the armor of God helps me reaffirm that I can choose to "be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power" (Ephesians 6:10-18) and "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

These Scriptures are just some that open my hands and my heart to spend sweet times in prayer with Christ Jesus, the author and perfecter of my faith. Not walking by sight but walking in faith helps keep me focused on Almighty God. I especially cherish His creativity and generosity wrapped in His never-ending, overwhelming love that feeds my soul and changes my perspective and expectations. Let's continue to share our stories of God's faithfulness that strengthen the kingdom of God and give God all the glory, I pray.

2 Samuel 5:22—6:11; Psalm 76; Acts 17:16-34; Mark 8:1-10

*by Jane Shinn*

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## ***Good News Daily***

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### **Sunday, July 27**

Roman 12:9-21 *Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.* (v.12 NRSV)

How does one rejoice in hope and be patient in suffering when faced with pain, fear, doubt or other circumstances that try to steal our focus on God?! Seems as if prayer and patience will bring hope? Hardly, I discovered in a recent encounter after a total knee replacement.

A cloud of fear and doubt covered over me; pain was unrelieved by any human intervention, including and especially the loving care and keeping by my husband, family, and friends. My prayers were primarily, "Help me, Jesus", praise/worship, and profound thanksgiving for others praying for me. "Taste and see that the Lord is sweet. Blessed is the man who hopes in him" (Psalm 33:9) helped me focus on Jesus.

Time passed. All were impressed with my flexibility, but the cloud cover remained. One day while praying, a dazzling whiteness of light appeared and brought me to tears. My hope in Christ had once again been affirmed by sight as God was pouring his love into my heart. YES, it is the light of the hope we have in our Triune God that opens the door for patience and perseverance to come...

2 Samuel 1:17-27; Psalms 24, 29; Matthew 25:31-46

### **Monday, July 28**

Psalm 57 *Have mercy upon me, O God, have mercy upon me, for in you our soul takes refuge. For great is your love, reaching to the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth.* (vv.1, 10 NIV)

David was on the run from Saul who had already tried to kill him. Finding refuge in a cave, David chooses to ask for God's mercy and declares his steadfast love in praising God, instead of dwelling in fear. Even though Saul was an enemy, David believed only God could remove Saul as king. Just think, in the midst of discovery David chooses God's way of love and faithfulness.

Recently, a dear friend confided that her husband was diagnosed with a form of Alzheimer's that destroys short term memory, plus interrupts pathways that process basic concepts, like addition. His life expectancy was 4-5 years. We hugged, we cried, we prayed.

Our prayers were prayers of adoration as we recalled God's faithful help and love in past times of distress. We thought of David's cry for mercy, trusting in God's love and faithfulness. Praising God's omnipotence, omnibenevolence, omniscience, and omnipotence, we laid all our fear and hopelessness at the foot of the Cross of Christ and affirmed, like David, "My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast, I will sing and make music" (v.7).

2 Samuel 2:1-11; Psalms 56, 58; Acts 15:36—16:5; Mark 6:14-29

## **Tuesday, July 29**

Psalm 62 *He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken.* (v.1)

When Paul and his companions were traveling through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, the Holy Spirit prevented them from preaching the word in Asia. Instead, Lydia, an influential businesswoman, a demon-possessed slave girl, and a jailer became believers through Paul's ministry in Philippi. How have you or I sought God's will and been led to confirm it by aligning it with God's Word, getting input from other mature Christians, checking our motives, or watching doors open or close....

I remember approaching God's throne of grace for wisdom regarding parenting a teenager. Peer pressure, adolescent "invincibility", discrepancies between guidelines, and actual performance were frequent. Frankly, Biblical instruction like, "Train up a child in the way he should go" (Proverbs 22:6) or "Do not provoke our children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4) were not specific. We focused on WWJD and told them what God thought about x, y, or z and reminded them about God's nature, promises, and plans. We thought we were good communicators and encouragers, but.....something wasn't clicking!

One day I asked the Lord what was going wrong and what we should do and heard, "Stop telling \_\_\_\_ about I AM. I want him to hear from Me." Abba Daddy IS their heavenly Father who created them out of love for relationship with him. Repenting, we freely surrendered our precious children into the hands of God. We affirm God is our rock and our salvation as "we proclaim his love in the morning and his faithfulness at night" (v.2).

2 Samuel 3:6-21; Psalm 61; Acts 16; 6-15; Mark 6:30-46

## **Wednesday, July 30**

Mark 6:47-56 *Then, he climbed into the boat with them and the wind died down. They were completely amazed, for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened.* (v.51)

Let me set the scene here...After the disciples suggested Jesus should send the people away to buy food as it was late and refused Jesus' suggestion to feed them due to cost, Jesus feeds the five thousand with five loaves and two fish with leftovers that filled twelve baskets. After the meal, Jesus immediately sends them to go ahead of him in the boat as he prays. A storm arose, the disciples strained at the oars, and Jesus walks on the lake to rescue them.

Yet, as soon as they safely landed, people recognized Jesus and carried the sick on mats to wherever he was, begging Jesus to let them touch his cloak and all who did were healed.

Hard heart? Unbelief? Not listening to others wisdom, aligning my actions with God's Word, or listening to Him in prayer, I am guilty. Life changing transformation occurred when I cried out for help. "Search me, O God, and know

my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the everlasting" (Psalm 139:23-24).

2 Samuel 3:22-39; Psalm 72; Acts 16:16-24

## **Thursday, July 31**

Acts 16:25-40 *About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken.* (vv.25-26a)

Although Roman citizens, Paul and Silas have been falsely imprisoned without a trial after being ordered by the magistrate to be stripped, severely flogged, and imprisoned. After the earthquake, all body chains were loose and jail doors were open. The jailer drew his sword to kill himself, heard Paul shout to not harm himself, rushed in, and asked, "Sir, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30b).

In the midst of all that Paul and Silas have endured, they have chosen to pray, sing hymns, and focus on Almighty God, rather than their shame, physical pain, or fear of further torment in the morning. I vividly remember a time when our family life was altered dramatically because of something out of our control and for which we were blameless. So difficult as our daily routines changed and shedding that feeling of dread every morning was a continual battle. Sharing the details with the family, we were together in our sorrows and joys without anger.

"But as for me (us), I (we) will have always have hope; I (we) will praise you more and more. My (our) lips will shout for joy when I (we) sing praise to you—I (we) whom you have redeemed." (Psalm 71 vv.14, 23). Jesus Christ is Our Redeemer, just like he was for Paul, Silas, the jailer, and his family.

2 Samuel 4:1-12; Psalms 70, 71; Mark 7:1-23

## **Friday, August 1**

Mark 7:24-37 *Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "Who do people say I am?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah and still others, one of the prophets." "But what about you?" He asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ."* (8:27-29)

Since Caesarea Philippi was known as a pagan city, it is easy to understand the peoples' response. Peter responds without hesitation, emphasizes Jesus' deity, understands he is the Son of God. He and the others still hadn't heard Jesus predict his death. There is more to know and understand for the disciples regarding Jesus, a common first name meaning "Messiah", "Anointed One", or "Chosen One".

Knowing not to add or subtract from God's Word and having received the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, we are invited 24/7 to taste and see that the Lord is good. God's nature of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, and faithfulness is received and the "Holy One" is made known. "Who do I say Jesus is?" Jesus is Immanuel and Redeemer: he answered my cry with a picture of an angel's wing that moved with every breath of my first grandchild in the