



TLM Daily Devotions

June 2020





Intro to the month of June

This time the Intro is something "lighter" than usual. But seriously true... Enjoy 2 sharings I received from two lovely TLMer friends:

"I hope they give us two weeks' notice before sending us back out into the real world. I think we'll all need the time to become ourselves again. And by "ourselves" I mean lose 10 pounds, cut our hair and get used to not drinking at 9:00 a.m.

New monthly budget: Gas \$0 Entertainment \$0 Clothes \$0 Groceries \$2,799.

Breaking News: Wearing a mask inside your home is now highly recommended. Not so much to stop COVID-19, but to stop eating.

When this quarantine is over, let's not tell some people.

Not to brag, but I haven't been late to anything in over 6 weeks.

It may take a village to raise a child, but I swear its going to take a vineyard to home school one.

They can open things up next month, I'm staying in until July to see what happens to you all first.

The spread of Covid-19 is based on two things: 1. How dense the population is. 2. How dense the population is.

People keep asking: "Is coronavirus REALLY all that serious?" Listen y'all, the churches and casinos are closed. When heaven and hell agree on the same thing it's probably pretty serious.

Home School Day 2: I'm trying to figure out how I can get this kid transferred out of my class.

For the second part of this quarantine do we have to stay with the same family or will they relocate us? Asking for myself ...

I was in a long line at 7:45 am today at the grocery store that opened at 8:00 for seniors *only*. A young man came from the parking lot and tried to cut in at the front of the line, but an old lady beat him back into the parking lot with her cane. He returned and tried to cut in again but an old man punched him in the gut, then kicked him to the ground and rolled him away. As he approached the line for the 3rd time he said, "If you don't let me unlock the door, you'll never get in there."

Enjoy your day. What else are you planning on doing?"

Kindly shared by Christine Osman (Scotland)

And a videoclip: <https://www.musestorytelling.com/choosehopestory> shared by Dr Johan Velema (Netherlands)

Stay safe everybody everywhere! May God bless us all!

Marta



Holy Spirit stir inside of me to have a new passion for my God

I know much has been said & written about prayer, yet these are a few ramblings of my mind. Through the years that I've known my God my level of passion towards Him can often be measured by the time I spend in prayer & how I pray. Not always but sometimes. Times of need seem to intensify my prayer mode, times of blessing, lighter & less intense. Then there are times when life is sort-of settled, no needs, no requests this can be a danger zone for lack-lustre prayers. A loss of passion for praying. Paul is writing to the Ephesian church & has this to say: *Ephesians 3:14-21 NIVUK For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*

Could Paul be saying: "Stay hungry for God! Look & understand from deep down inside of you, who you are because of Jesus & what He wants us to do on behalf of heaven & His Bride, The Church." Pray for more passion for Our Heavenly Father & His mission to reach & save the lost!

Passion promotes prayer! This requires **discipline** in our prayer lives. How do we develop this?

Paul gives us a few clues.

1. Decide to start praying. Set aside a time & a place to pray. (...I kneel before the Father...)
2. Don't be repetitive in your praying, assign a subject, a topic for each day & pray into that. Don't be afraid to change if needs be. (...out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being...)
3. Know that our God is able to direct & answer our discussion with Him. (... who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine...)
4. Let love be your motivation for praying. Love towards Our Heavenly Father & others. (...established in love - to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,...)
5. Prayer is influential, to bring glory to Jesus the Christ & to the generations that follow us. (... to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations...) *Romans 15:5-6 NIVUK May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind towards each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Make prayer count, prayer is more important than you think.

Dan Izzett - Zimbabwe. Retired pastor. I was diagnosed with lepromatous leprosy in 1972. Served on TLMI board for eight years and on the Zimbabwe board for 15 years. I now serve on the ALM board and do advocacy for them.



Jesus' Presence Brings the Gift of Peace.

What have we all been doing differently during these past weeks?

A paradigm shift can come so suddenly and change the way we perceive things and a situation or even life itself is forever different because we see it through new eyes, from a different perspective, with new glasses through a different paradigm.

If you have been reading more of the life of Jesus in the Gospels after the Crucifixion and the Resurrection those forty days leading to the Ascension two thousand years ago mirrors our time leading up to and going on from Easter. When Jesus came to his disciples during their period of lockdown and voluntary isolation, because they were in fear of the authorities, he came with a gift.

John 20: 19 – 31

His appearances to them over those six weeks in many different places affected in them a paradigm shift – a new way of seeing the world. They would go from hiding behind locked doors to standing on street corners; from fear of arrest to singing in prisons; from running for their lives to losing all fear of death, because they had talked to and spoken with and embraced the one who had conquered death and given them a new vision of life. 20/20 vision. Clearer vision.

They had come to understand the promise of God in *Jeremiah chapter 29, verse 11: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*

What are these plans for your life? Have the priorities and values changed with these recent events?

Jesus' appearance to the disciples in that period of lockdown, to the believing and the sceptical, brought about a new way of looking at things. Those six weeks between Easter and Pentecost effected within them a new sense of Jesus' presence and with that presence came a present – the gift of peace.

Peace is not the absence of fear but trust during the storm.

The realization that Jesus is in the boat with us. And indeed others are in the boat also. We discover in a new and wonderful way that we are all in the same boat and can find new friendships as we work together to bail out the boat and keep this thing afloat until Jesus calms the storm.

The peace of Jesus came as he breathed on them his Holy Spirit. The peace came with his presence. Out of this peace and contemplation will come purpose but also the power to accomplish that purpose.

Colin Osborne - Chair of the TLM Global Fellowship.



Relationship or rules?

Luke 15: 29 (The older brother said to his father): “Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends”

I heard this story in a sermon in December 2019. It struck me personally but also professionally because of my role in safeguarding within TLM.

A poor Burundian woman found herself in a violent marriage. Her overbearing husband would write out a long list of household chores to be done each day before he returned from work. At the end of each day, he would tick off all that she’d done, and beat her mercilessly if anything was outstanding. So she was beaten every night. To her relief, he became sick and died and within a few years she was blessed to remarry – this time to a kind and loving husband. Gone were the lists. She simply loved serving him. Months into a new marriage, she found a crumpled piece of paper behind one of the old lists from her previous husband! She read it through nervously, wincing as the old memories came flooding back. But then, to her amazement, she realised that she had completed everything on the old list that very day. What she couldn’t accomplish motivated by fear of punishment, she had fulfilled out of energising love.

Jesus told many stories in order to teach truths. In the story of the lost son in Luke 15, which son was one lost? We know that the younger son was lost and we all know his story. However, ultimately the older son was the most lost, because he was exposed as being lost even when at home. He had, as John Wesley spoke of his own pre-conversion experience, “the religion of a servant, not a son”. *He had played it by the rules while completely missing out on the relationship.* Tragic!

I see myself in the older son so many times, when I think my ‘doing’ for God is what is important. I thank God that HE is patient with me and understands that I get it wrong so many times – and guess what? HE loves me anyway! Believe me when I say, there is nothing you can do to make God love you more, and there is nothing you can do to make him love you less. My best option to BE in his presence and enjoy my relationship with Him.

One of my favourite verses in the Bible is Romans 8:38-39 – I held onto it at one of the most difficult moments in my life *‘For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.’* – see that? See how much God loves you?

God is a God of relationship. Please remove any images you have in your mind and heart of a hard taskmaster or a cranky old man, HE is the best loving Father, beyond what you could possibly imagine. Enjoy him!

Father, I choose to follow you today, grateful that you want a relationship with me, not my obedience to a long list of rules. Amen!

Jannine Ebenso: Head of Quality Assurance, TLM International Office.

(Adapted from: Choose Life: 356 Readings for Radical Disciples, Simon Guillebaud. Simon delivered the sermon I heard in Dec 2019 at St Paul’s Ealing.)



“...for the good...” – Part 1

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Romans 8,28

Earlier this month God gave a thought to announce a new appeal TLMwide: “...for the good...” Let us all see from a higher perspective the positive things amidst Covid-19, and see God’s work in its complexity! Several contributions arrived already, the others are to come yet. May this new series contribute to a more joyful and more thankful discipleship in us all!

We humans have a contrasted, dualistic way of thinking. We see the world as black and white, hot or cold, pleasant or unpleasant, so we like or dislike, appreciate or hate. Also our judgements are rooted in this way of thinking: we call “good” what we like, is pleasant, tastes nice, and is fitting to our comfort. And we call “bad” what is hard, needs effort, is painful, waste of time or energy. So we are arranging the happenings of our lives and that of the world, too, into two separate piles, calling them “good”, and “bad”.

Our recent situation worldwide is surely belonging to the latter group. What is good in a pandemic? Nothing. A tiny wee virus turned everything upside down, keeping mankind in hand. It is fearful, affects health, daily life, normality, smooth running, educational systems, managements, economy, fuel price, our small households in the same way as it effects the World Bank. It affects church in such a way that even ungodly powers were not able to achieve: no public services in the normal way. It effects the future, causing shortfalls, crises, lockdown, and directly affects billions of inhabitants -ourselves- of the planet. This pandemic is BAD! Even UGLY! And we all are experiencing it from Asia to America, from Africa across Europe to Australia how media is jumping upon the topic, making it even more fearful and shaping a dark future for us all of it, pushing us downwards into hopelessness.

God’s Word represents a very different approach. In this verse we do not hear about “good” versus “bad”. But ALL is working together, in the original Greek: syn – ergei = co-working, cooperating, collaborating! Not just the so called “good” elements have a positive role of usefulness. But the bad ones, too! God is not talking about selection but about complexity, oneness, fusion, where the components are various, but from all these ONE single product grows out. And this one single thing is the Purpose of God. The ultimate goal. The end. The result.

Our human eyes are short-sighted. We see what is close to our hands. God is looking at the whole picture from the end backwards. For Him it is the goal that counts as He sees all from the perspective of eternity. And everything is working towards this single, final, future goal He wants to achieve with us. Life is full of challenges and adventures. If we check them one by one, they may not all be nice. Often we revolt or do not understand them. Our attempts to understand all through an experimental approach are failing as God’s perspectives are far beyond our understandings. Lots of things we will first understand in heaven. No understanding of them in this life. But each of them has purpose, anyhow!

In my life, too, God used a virus to stir things up, and to then put everything into the service of “THE GOOD”. Two days before my 18th birthday, well prepared for my maturity exams due a few weeks later, marching towards a future as musician, I fell seriously ill. A virus was attacking my heart and caused a carditis. Hospitalised as an emergency, for over one month... So weak that my mother was feeding me. First thing flowing away: my preparing with hours of piano exercises daily for my entrance as a musician... Then the hope of the maturity, too... Then one by one everything slid out of reality and remained only antibiotics and rest, rest, rest. For one whole schoolyear. But God did not rest and softly, permanently and directly talked to me and made me understand a different future. His silent voice in my complete inactivity was mobilising and clear, giving a call to seek to apply to the Faculty of Theology for studying to

become a minister. Not a real promising career at all for a girl in a communist country, in persecuted church... But it was clear. And 48 years later, as all along, I am sure that the virus and all the mixture of unexpected and unpleasant elements were happening “for the good”: the ultimate purpose of God. God saved me to ever claim since then that “it would have been better otherwise”, but praising Him for His wisdom to have sent a virus and through it arranged all “for the good”.

Marta Risiko – country leader TLM Hungary



“...for the good...” – Part 2

Deus Ex Machina

*God is working his purpose out as year succeeds to year;
God is working his purpose out, and the time is drawing near;
nearer and nearer draws the time the time that shall surely be,
when the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
as the waters cover the sea.*

Written in 1894 by Arthur Campbell Ainger as a tribute to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Edward White Benson

Deus ex machina is a plot device in a story or drama where a seemingly unsolvable problem in a story is suddenly and abruptly resolved by an unexpected and unlikely occurrence.

So, enter coronavirus:

I knew the plot all right. The environmentalists had been spelling it out for years. I am old enough to have seen evidence of climate change (or something very like it) for myself. But take the cars off the road, the planes out of the sky, and the huge cruise liners out of the sea: no government in the world would do that, it would be economic suicide.

Well, somebody has done it and I am waiting to see what will happen in the next chapter.

Rosemary Tootle, VSO Purulia 1968-69, volunteer International Office from 2002



Psalm 41

For the director of music. A psalm of David.

¹Blessed are those who have regard for the weak;
the LORD delivers them in times of trouble.

²The LORD protects and preserves them—
they are counted among the blessed in the land—
he does not give them over to the desire of their foes.

³The LORD sustains them on their sickbed
and restores them from their bed of illness.

⁴I said, “Have mercy on me, LORD;
heal me, for I have sinned against you.”

⁵My enemies say of me in malice,
“When will he die and his name perish?”

⁶When one of them comes to see me,
he speaks falsely, while his heart gathers slander;
then he goes out and spreads it around.

⁷All my enemies whisper together against me;
they imagine the worst for me, saying,

⁸“A vile disease has afflicted him;
he will never get up from the place where he lies.”

⁹Even my close friend,
someone I trusted,
one who shared my bread,
has turned against me.

¹⁰But may you have mercy on me, LORD;
raise me up, that I may repay them.

¹¹I know that you are pleased with me,
for my enemy does not triumph over me.

¹²Because of my integrity you uphold me
and set me in your presence forever.

¹³Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting.

Amen and Amen.



Psalm 42

For the director of music. A maskil of the Sons of Korah.

¹As the deer pants for streams of water,
so my soul pants for you, my God.

²My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When can I go and meet with God?

³My tears have been my food
day and night,
while people say to me all day long,
“Where is your God?”

⁴These things I remember
as I pour out my soul:
how I used to go to the house of God
under the protection of the Mighty One
with shouts of joy and praise
among the festive throng.

⁵Why, my soul, are you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
for I will yet praise him,
my Savior and my God.

⁶My soul is downcast within me;
therefore I will remember you
from the land of the Jordan,
the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar.

⁷Deep calls to deep
in the roar of your waterfalls;
all your waves and breakers
have swept over me.

⁸By day the LORD directs his love,
at night his song is with me—
a prayer to the God of my life.

⁹I say to God my Rock,
“Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I go about mourning,

oppressed by the enemy?"

¹⁰My bones suffer mortal agony
as my foes taunt me,
saying to me all day long,
"Where is your God?"

¹¹Why, my soul, are you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
for I will yet praise him,
my Savior and my God.



“...for the good...” – Part 3

A surprise in God's plan

“Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.” Proverbs 1: 21

All of us have been impacted by the recent global pandemic as I adjust to the new normal. The Government of Nepal has announced the National lockdown since last March 23, closure of all workplaces except essential services (like hospitals, pharmacy and food stores). All schools are to move to home-based learning, and all government offices are closed. Due to all these changes, my plans had been changed too.

Last January after the field visit, I needed to prepare a 2 days leprosy workshop for the hospital staff in February, and then I continued my second visit to the two INF hospitals again in the beginning of March, as that was the week where the Hindu festival (Holi festival) took place, difficult to go out, but I went by rickshaw for a morning without any colour powder on my body, praise the Lord for His protection. The second visit was very successful too, the staff were eager to learn and put into practice what I had taught them in that few days, and wish that I could go back after 1 month to continue supporting them, so I have planned to go back in April, however, all activities stopped after the National lockdown.

After those exhausted weeks I returned home for a few days, and then I was informed to go down to Kathmandu for my work visa interview, so I decided to visit TLM Nepal's Anandaban hospital for a few days during my waiting time in Kathmandu.

My plan to visit the hospital was 5 days, but during the middle of my visit the Government of Nepal announced the National lockdown in response to coronavirus (COVID-19). So, I had no chance to return as I planned, at the end I stayed another 5 days. The hospital guest house was located inside the hospital compound, a new building with comfortable room and delicious Nepali food, although I could not go anywhere, but that was a good time to catch up my sleep and had more time for retreat in such quiet and beautiful compound. The Lord knew my need for good rest after the last 2 weeks exhausted field trips.

During my time in Anandaban hospital, I met many old friends whom I have met 27 years ago when I joint TLMI to come here for my leprosy orientation in Nepal, although not many left in the hospital nowadays, most of them have retired. However, one staff I met really gave me a big surprise, it was amazing to know that he had a very good memory of me even he met me once about 33 years ago in his uncle's house. The story was that in 1987 I went to visit this hospital as a volunteer to support a Japanese missionary nurse, she arranged for me and other Japanese girl to have 1 week village stay in order to know the culture and life, so we were arranged to live in this staff's uncle's house, I still remembered his uncle was the hospital driver, he let us stay upstairs in a clean room, but downstairs room was the place to keep his animals like goats and chickens, the picture is still in my memory, the farm house was a small hut, but it had a lot of farming land outside, the toilet was very far away in the field outside. I remembered his 2 young nephews came to meet us. Now this staff told me he was one of them, very young (12 or 13 Years old) at that time, and later when he grew up, he found a job in this hospital. His uncle has died a few years ago, and the house was collapsed during earthquake, now he showed me the new house picture in the same village, and his uncle's picture too. I never imagine someone so young could remember me after 33 years.

Praise the Lord to show me His faithfulness in my life, to meet so many friends in different places and different countries.

Yuek Ming Poon (Hong Kong) Worked with TLMI for 22 years. 1993 – 2000 seconded to INF to work in Nepal in leprosy clinic as Clinic Manager. 2002 – 2004 worked with TLM as POID Technical Officer in India, 2005 – 2012 worked with TLM as Country Leader in China and Laos, 2013 -2015 worked with TLM in PNG as Capacity Building Advisor. June 2015 left TLM and then studied in Vancouver Regent Bible College from September 15 to April 2016, and then back to HK involving in Nepali ministry. 2017 back to Nepal with INF as Leprosy Nursing Advisor in Green Pastures Hospital. 2019 started second term with INF in Nepal as LNF leprosy Advisor.



“...for the good...” – Part 4

Irrefutable evidence

When Elizabeth and I woke on the Easter weekend, we felt that we had been transported during the night into a world sculpted by the famed South African artist, Pierneef. Pierneef rose to prominence in South Africa during the 1920s and is celebrated for his landscape paintings, characterised by his distinctive and instantly recognisable dramatic use of light and colour. The sharp features in many of Pierneef’s “monumentalist” paintings are doubtless the product of the etching technique which he mastered as a young man.

As we looked out across the bay, features in the mountains which we had not previously noticed sprung into focus. Spectacular cloud formations deep in the interior billowed into view. Details of the ships in the local harbour were startling in their clarity. Mountains to the far north of us were clearly visible. Boulders on the hills surrounding us leapt into sharp relief. That night, lights from across the bay, that we had never seen before, shone crisply. The local harbour lights twinkled and pulsated with a vibrancy which was almost disconcerting, as if their wattage had mysteriously doubled. In addition, the number of lights seemed to have vastly multiplied. Details of the houses above the harbour were so rich that it felt as if the bay had shrunk dramatically in size, drawing everything much closer to us. The fishing boats looked huge and ungainly. Of all the changes, the transformation in the colours was the most remarkable – the sky developed an intensity that seemed like someone had been fiddling with the settings in Photoshop and over the bay, shades and hues of blue emerged which we’d never seen before. The intensity of the light brought the flowers in our garden to life – the bougainvillea and strelitzias were extraordinarily vivid. After an astonishing sunset, the views of the Milky Way through my telescope was reminiscent of some of the best viewing that I have enjoyed on moonless nights in the desert. Elizabeth turned to me and said, “It’s our advancing age – we’re losing our marbles, but we’ve been given super-vision to make up for it!”

Suddenly it dawned on us – no pollution! South Africa had been in lockdown for several weeks at that time, and the lack of activity was clearly leading to an astonishing improvement in air quality. I was both amazed and puzzled. We live a long way from the airport, there are no highways near us, and we’ve got wind, lots of wind. I’d never been aware of any build-up of pollution, except on the rarest of days when the wind dies away and pollution from the refinery north of the city drifts southwards on the ghost of North-Wester. So, whilst I am at a loss to explain the source of the air-pollution, the irrefutable evidence for the transformation of air quality was all around us. The views were simply stupendous, improving with each day of the lengthening lockdown. With each sunrise, glorious, luminous and dazzling colours spilled out over the sky and bay, as if a kindergarten full of children with pots of poster paint had burst free and were splashing their colours across mountains and meadows. The lockdown had unlocked the beauty previously entombed by invisible [and deadly] fumes. Elizabeth and I are constantly drawn back to the window, as each passing hour reveals fresh splendours and previously concealed details.

The transformation outside my window is breath-taking, but transient. The Bible speaks of a more glorious – and eternal - transformation:

“And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.” 2 Corinthians 3:18 [ESV]

The lockdown has unveiled a wondrous beauty all around me. The Holy Spirit longs to unveil and even greater glory in you and me today and every day. We have all in some way seen the transformation in nature wrought by the lockdown – let this inspire us to seek His holy transformation of ourselves. When I look out of the window, I'm compelled to exclaim "This is amazing!" When people look at us, are they compelled to say,

"What an amazing Spirit is at work in his life"?

Peter Laubscher - Country Leader, Southern Africa. Peter and Elizabeth Laubscher have worked with the Leprosy Mission since 1981. They are blessed with three children. Peter cruises the waters of False Bay when he's not trying to polish scratches out of telescope mirrors.



For the good. – Part 5

What a very strange world we live in! When we entered the year of 2020 many of us had plans and programmes all worked out, maybe holidays booked, but most things have had to be cancelled or postponed. From mid March here in UK we have been locked down, and many other countries before us.

As I said it is a very strange and different world! I don't ever remember the expression social distancing before, but it's now in daily use. Many of us are in isolation and aren't allowed to do our own shopping. I share a house with Joyce, otherwise I may have called it solitary confinement, but how quickly the days pass. We listen to the professors every day as they try to help us understand what is really going on. We have learned about the R number, and how important it is to keep the number down as much as possible. We feel very sad for all the bereaved, and especially for those who have died caring for the sick. We ask when will we ever get back to anything like normal?

Now we have plenty of time to read and pray, to enjoy the birds, and especially to rejoice in Gods amazing and very lovely creation, which this year has been spectacular!

Now the most wonderful thing of all is that the whole world may be locked down or grounded, but nothing can lock down or ground the Holy Spirit. He is free as ever, and perhaps more able to get through to us because we are in solitude, and not rushing around trying to catch up with all our usual business. Maybe this is the reason for the pandemic, so that we start listening to God, that we become human beings instead of human doings! Many of us now have plenty of time to listen to what the Lord wants to say to us, not just as individuals but as churches, and as countries. Let us take all the opportunities given to spend as much time as we can in the Lords presence. God continues to work all things out for the good of those who love Him.

Mollie Clark, Purulis, Bhutan and the International Office.



“...for the good...” – Part 6

‘the lifter of my head’

“But you, LORD, are a shield around me, my glory, the One who lifts my head high.” Psalm 3:3

Years ago I developed a bad back problem, but like we do, I ‘soldiered on’ until I could hardly walk. I had to take time out, was admitted to hospital, and then became the ‘victim’ of a procedure that went wrong. It meant about five months of being immobile and then gradual rehabilitation, starting to walk again, getting out, building up strength.

Looking back I compare that time with what communities all over the world are going through now. For many people normal life is suspended; and those who have to work are restricted and isolated in ways we are not used to. It is difficult also for children who cannot go to school, and parents digging into personal resources to teach, entertain, feed and encourage them... and keep the peace! And for some the challenge is even greater: loneliness, financial loss, medical treatments on hold, maybe strain on mental health, fear of domestic violence and worse. Many have been very ill, many have died without the comfort of loved ones at their bedside.

But at the same time we reflect on how, when forced to rest awhile, to be still, ‘laid aside’ from normal life, we find some benefits too. The air is cleaner, the urban world is quieter, the waters clearer. And personally, -there is unexpected time to think, to do those things we don’t normally have time or energy for. Is it possible that out of the awfulness of a global pandemic (and without making light of the sufferings of many) God may lift our eyes to higher things and open our hearts to deeper ones? Is it possible, too, that life’s usual busy-ness, the driven-ness of the modern world, are actually the things which normally ‘lock us down’, and God is able to *free us up* in this time *‘for the good’*?

From those years ago when I was ‘locked down’, amidst frustration and fears, wondering about the future, some significant and lasting memories stand out. A phrase kept running through my mind: *“the lifter of my head”*. I had learnt it in a song based on Psalm 3:3, and I held onto the belief that God would be the lifter of my head, not only physically, but in other ways too.

Those other ways became clear as I was ‘freed up’, leaving hospital, getting mobile. I found a deeper appreciation of simple, basic things: I could walk, I could see and hear and feel. I took a new delight in green grass, the beauty of flowers and trees, the sheer wonder of God’s creation; -and not just in those, but in the preciousness of human contact, interaction, touch, fun and activity together.

I don’t know whether I would have gained this depth of appreciation of God’s love expressed in ‘ordinary’ things without five months of painful ‘lock-down’! But I look back in gratitude to my Lord who was, and is, *“a shield around me, my glory and the lifter of my head.”* He alone can work through the awful things of a fallen world, *“for the good of those who love him, and are called according to his purpose.”*

May God bless you too as you work through difficult times.

David Beazley began involvement with The Leprosy Mission in 1992 when he came as Minister to a Church near the International Office in Brentford. He acted as an informal ‘chaplain’ to the Office, and served on the International General Council for some years. At the same time he became a member of TLM England and Wales Board, serving as Chairman for six years and on various committees. He chaired the Spiritual Ministry MAWG, and is also able to serve TLM by leading retreat days and other such things as opportunity allows. He now pastors a Church in South-West England part time, and continues as a volunteer speaker for TLM.



“...for the good...” - Part 7

STRONGER

DAILY AFFIRMATION

I am getting STRONGER and STRONGER every day in every way.

I am expecting the best, preparing for the worst, and maximizing what comes.

I commit to daily growing and learning in every area of my life.

I already have every quality of success inside of me and I am daily recognizing, claiming, developing, and using them.

I am solution-focused, not problem-centered.

I believe James 1:2 and 3, and respond to life's hardships and trials with peace and joy because I know they make me STRONGER.

I have hope in the future because Romans 8:28 tells me that all things work together for good.

I am courageous standing in the furnace of life because I know I am not alone, and I know that those I love are encouraged and lifted up when they see me love and serve others despite my own trials.

Yes! I am getting STRONGER and STRONGER every day in every way.

I know God is perfectly positioning me to fulfill my life's purpose, and in order to do that

I am getting STRONGER and STRONGER every day in every way.



Psalm 43

¹Vindicate me, my God,
and plead my cause
against an unfaithful nation.

Rescue me from those who are
deceitful and wicked.

²You are God my stronghold.

Why have you rejected me?

Why must I go about mourning,
oppressed by the enemy?

³Send me your light and your faithful care,
let them lead me;

let them bring me to your holy mountain,
to the place where you dwell.

⁴Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God, my joy and my delight.

I will praise you with the lyre,

O God, my God.

⁵Why, my soul, are you downcast?

Why so disturbed within me?

Put your hope in God,

for I will yet praise him,

my Savior and my God.



Psalm 44

For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A maskil

¹We have heard it with our ears, O God;
our ancestors have told us
what you did in their days,
in days long ago.

²With your hand you drove out the nations
and planted our ancestors;
you crushed the peoples
and made our ancestors flourish.

³It was not by their sword that they won the land,
nor did their arm bring them victory;
it was your right hand, your arm,
and the light of your face, for you loved them.

⁴You are my King and my God,
who decrees victories for Jacob.

⁵Through you we push back our enemies;
through your name we trample our foes.

⁶I put no trust in my bow,
my sword does not bring me victory;
⁷but you give us victory over our enemies,
you put our adversaries to shame.

⁸In God we make our boast all day long,
and we will praise your name forever.

⁹But now you have rejected and humbled us;
you no longer go out with our armies.

¹⁰You made us retreat before the enemy,
and our adversaries have plundered us.

¹¹You gave us up to be devoured like sheep
and have scattered us among the nations.

¹²You sold your people for a pittance,
gaining nothing from their sale.

¹³You have made us a reproach to our neighbors,
the scorn and derision of those around us.

¹⁴You have made us a byword among the nations;
the peoples shake their heads at us.

¹⁵I live in disgrace all day long,
and my face is covered with shame

¹⁶at the taunts of those who reproach and revile me,
because of the enemy, who is bent on revenge.

¹⁷All this came upon us,
though we had not forgotten you;
we had not been false to your covenant.

¹⁸Our hearts had not turned back;
our feet had not strayed from your path.

¹⁹But you crushed us and made us a haunt for jackals;
you covered us over with deep darkness.

²⁰If we had forgotten the name of our God
or spread out our hands to a foreign god,
²¹would not God have discovered it,
since he knows the secrets of the heart?

²²Yet for your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.

²³Awake, Lord! Why do you sleep?
Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever.

²⁴Why do you hide your face
and forget our misery and oppression?

²⁵We are brought down to the dust;
our bodies cling to the ground.

²⁶Rise up and help us;
rescue us because of your unfailing love.



The bread of Life

John 6

The Sea of Galilee isn't all that big but it is a bit of walk round from one place to another. We often find it's quicker to take a boat to get from one village to another, and if the weather has been bad the path near the lake can be very muddy. It might be easier to take a path through the hills which is quite long if heading back to Capernaum, or wanting to go as far as Tiberias.

The hills round the lake are beautiful, we can sit on the slopes looking down onto the beach; bit like being in a Roman amphitheatre. We don't go there, it's for the Gentiles, not for us, the locals. Why would we want to go there? It's so much nicer out in the open, we don't have to sit in rows, just find a nice slope, sit down with our friends, with a skin full of water some bread and dried fish. What more do we need. The dried fish doesn't go off, and if it's hot, the salt is good for us. Yes, you need salt when it is hot, some doctors say it's bad for one, I suppose for some that's true, see that woman over there, see her feet, very swollen, she has the dropsy, she shouldn't have salt; maybe the man we met yesterday can help her. Maybe that is why she is here today.

We were a big crowd yesterday, and the preacher man from Nazareth was teaching us. Then, it got late, our sack was empty; the people next to us had nothing left, then, suddenly there was bread in front of the preacher man, he was blessing it. Then there was bread everywhere; lots and lots of it. Who is he? Someone different? His close friends, Andrew and Peter, and those other fishermen James and John, maybe they could tell us more about him.

Then yesterday evening they, his friends went off in their boat, but Jesus, he didn't go with them. Jesus that's his name, later on they called him the Messiah, but then we just called him Jesus, or the preacher-man. He could be quite severe sometimes, other times he didn't quite seem on this earth, different; well it was like that yesterday, he just vanished, he wasn't in the boat. I saw it with my own eyes, we asked each other where did he go. No one knew.

Last night was rough. It can blow up very quickly on the lake.

Well, now we've found him again and he is with his disciples, those are his close friends. Listen, he is talking to us. We are big crowd, whole families, children, youngster, people who are ill, in pain a mixed bunch. He, this Jesus can be a bit direct sometimes. Better listen to him, it might be a good story. He's a good story teller, and they all have a point to them. Not always easy to see the point. What's that he's saying.

Says we are only here today 'cos we stuffed ourselves with the free food; of course we did, we were hungry. Think of those who have nothing to eat at all, did they get some, hope they didn't stuff themselves as they would have been sick. You can't be too careful when helping people, I don't mean that you hold back or anything, but just being careful not to make someone ill, 'cos they've not had a proper meal for ages.

I am wondering off now. So he continued to teach us, Not sure if we really understand all he says, things one can see are easier to understand than words; why shouldn't we ask for a sign. *What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you?*

.....

In the gospel passage we have just read the crowd had experienced a sign the day before, they have forgotten and ask for more signs, bigger and more dramatic. Later in this chapter in the gospel according to John the disciples ask about the meaning of the bread. They too hadn't seen a connection between visible bread and spiritual bread.

Today we give thanks for the bread of life. The bread which we share, I saw the other day the linguist link companion and bread. It is from the Latin com pain, with bread. When we share bread we share something much more, much larger

'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. John 6 v 35

Elisabeth Liz Hichens épouse Barnett, Occupational Therapist worked with TLM at the Philadelphia Leprosy Hospital, Salur, AP India and at RSK Sungai Kunda, Palembang Sumatra, Indonesia. 1979-88. Today, she is retired living in South West France; with her husband James, she is joint secretary of la Mission Lèpre, France.

I am dipping in and out of the book A Preacher's Tale, Explorations in Narrative Preaching by Jon Russell . It is a series of sermons written in this style. I read one in a service and another time I wrote this. There is a French Christian who performs monologues in a similar style Alain Portenseigne. Vous croyez à cette histoire? Passe on Lukes gospel; a year or two ago we saw him act one as Joseph le père adoptive; after seeing him perform one goes away with lots to thinks about.



How well are you taking care of yourself's well-being and your health?

5 Reasons Why God Wants Us Healthy, Well and Fit to Serve Him There are probably a few hundred reasons that might motivate you to care for yourself and to be healthy. Here are five, actually four, reasons that motivate me at a really deep level... and I think that these are reasons why God would want us all to be motivated by.

1. It glorifies God
2. You're taking care of your body – His temple
3. It's being a good witness – In community outreach programs
4. You'll have more energy & enthusiasm – be better equipped for what God has planned for you
5. I need your help with a 5th reason?

It Glorifies God The Bible says in *1 Corinthians 10:31* that whatever we do, we're to do it to the glory of God. It also tells us in Isaiah that we were created and formed by God to glorify Him. This is our primary purpose in life – to glorify God. We do that when we care for our body and live a healthy lifestyle.

Our Body is God's Temple and for Us to Care For One scripture that reminds us that our body is God's temple is *1 Corinthians 6:19-20*. God's Holy Spirit lives inside a believer. After we accept Jesus into our heart, God gives us His Spirit to help us live the kind of life He wants us to live. Since God actually lives in us, Paul tells us in this verse that our body is His temple. Since God "bought" us with a high price, Jesus' death, than, we are obligated to care for our body which is His temple.

Being Healthy is Being a Good Witness *Acts 1:8* reminds us that we are to be witnesses for other people. People look for us to be models of the Christian faith. We ought to desire to live our lives in a way that represents our faith well. Taking care of our health is one way that we can be a good witness to others we serve and work with.

You'll Have More Energy & Enthusiasm to Do God's Work *Ephesians 2:10* helps us see that we are God's masterpiece, created to do the good things that He had planned a long time ago for us to do. We all know that the more fit and healthy we are the more energy & enthusiasm we will have. The more energy that we have, the more we can put into whatever task we are doing. We'll also be better able to sustain ourself for the long haul.

What's a 5th Reason? What is one other reason that you think God wants us to be healthy? Comment by adding a 5th reason that you think would be pleasing to God.

Something to Reflect On

What we believe determines what we do. I suspect that if you believe what I've written above, and you value your relationship with God, it's likely that you are taking good care of your body and your health.

That's why your personal relationship with God is very important to you,



“...for the good...” – Part 8

As I write this COVID-19 confirmed cases are passing one and a half million with 84,000 deaths. In this generation of privilege and the assumption that we can control the world around us, this is hugely worrying to people across the world. Likewise, at The Leprosy Mission we are concerned about how it will affect people affected by leprosy who are some of the most vulnerable as well as our dear colleagues and friends across the various members of the Leprosy Mission Global Fellowship. We are also increasingly thinking about the financial impact on TLM and its ability to provide for the projects and people it supports.

Sometimes it seems like this is a new kind situation for TLM, for it is certainly so for us! However, TLM has faced crisis before and overcame. Time and time again in times of crisis the Israelites are reminded to remember what God has done for them in the past, so I wish to do likewise, to remind us of a bit of TLM history. Shortly after Wellesley Bailey's last international tour the 'the First World War broke out, bringing its dark cloud of uncertainty and trial and distress... What did the future hold? And how would the income be raised when everyone's attention and efforts were engaged in the duties and obligations of war-time citizenship? Moreover, prices began to rise, and the appeals from the Field did not diminish but rather increased. The Mission's work involved the daily supply of basic human needs for thousands of patients with no other resources for their support. It could not therefore be suspended or abandoned. . No withdrawals were voluntarily engaged in. Only economy was urged upon all'.

TLM issued a **call to prayer** to their supporters 'not as a panic measure' out of fear but due to their depth of faith. 'They had during all the years since the Mission's beginnings trustfully committed the work to God and then gone forward to unfaltering action. After all as Wellesley said: "This Mission has been born and cradled in prayer; it has been brought up on prayer; it has been nourished on prayer, and prayer has been at the bottom of its success from the first moment of its life. We feel we owe all, under God, to the prayer of people who have been guided by His Holy Spirit"'.

During that (World War 1) crisis our founder Wellesley Bailey declared: " It is an unspeakable comfort to be able to fall back upon our gracious and wonderworking God at such a time as this, and to listen to His voice as it comes to us out of the thick cloud: 'Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.' Surely now is the time to prove all our former protestations of trust"'.

The First World War was not a small matter 70 million people were sucked into fighting in it and it was also one of the deadliest conflicts in history, with an estimated nine million soldiers and seven million civilians killed as a direct result of the war, while resulting genocides and the related 1918 influenza pandemic caused another 17–50 million deaths worldwide. TLM centres in India run by German missionaries faced crisis as they were cut off from their support and the missionaries were eventually imprisoned.

Yet it soon became evident that out of the thick cloud God did indeed open windows of heaven and poured out His blessing. In fact, the Mission's income continued to increase. There was an amazing sacrificial donation from a farmer in the USA, and new supporting countries began. There was even a new

promising treatment for leprosy developed during the time. Not a time of defence, withdrawal or constriction in interventions, but of growth!!!

When Wellesley Bailey's Bible was opened at *Isaiah Chapter 42:16* (the verse given when he came to faith) one may read: *'And I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.'* With his comment: 'Now are ye not light in the Lord, walk-Ephesians 5:8' (For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the LORD. Live as children of light).

I believe this is indeed also a word for us today that God will continue to lead us through this dark time of coronavirus crisis and I believe that we need not wither but can thrive during it! This is the history of how God is faithful to TLM as we are faithful to His call and sustains us during a crisis.

Reference: https://missiology.org.uk/pdf/e-books/miller_a-donald/an-inn-called-welcome_miller.pdf

James Pender – Programmes and Advocacy Officer (Asia) – TLM England and Wales



“...for the good...” – Part 9

Renewed Life

Ezekiel 37:1-14, John 11:1-45

Over the past weeks I have observed the machinery of our modern world coming to a slow halt. The clicks and zooms of cars have evaporated, the yawning gaps between airplanes flying overhead in the morning have widened, and bustling streets have been vacated, as though we were releasing them back into nature. And as the city’s inhabitants creep into exile, what we leave behind is an increasingly soundless, lifeless world. Our former lives, for now, on hold – and the future uncertain.

When Ezekiel is given the prophecy in the valley of the dry bones, the Jews would have been living for decades in this kind of exile, albeit in a much worse situation. The Jewish Kingdom had recently been invaded by the Neo-Babylonian empire. They were forced to swear allegiance to the emperor Nebuchadnezzar II and live under its laws, which may have included worshipping the moon-god Sin. Ezekiel himself was among the many Judeans forced into captivity by the Babylonians. Later, the Jewish Temple was destroyed, and the Jews were deported from Jerusalem to Babylon. It was the ancient Mesopotamian equivalent of ethnic cleansing. When Ezekiel prophesies that Israel would be restored to the land the Lord had given them, this promise would have seemed impossible in light of Israel’s present condition. The nation of Israel was swiftly nearing its demise; even if dry bones were to come back to life, there would be no Temple, no infrastructure, no land, no sustainable future in sight. Believing the promises of God in these challenging circumstances would have been difficult.

The same can be said for the friends and family of Lazarus. We learn that Mary, the one who poured priceless perfume on Jesus’s feet, has a brother in Bethany who is critically ill. When Jesus receives the message, he does not immediately arise and travel to them. Instead, he stays where he is for two days, confidently saying ‘this sickness will not end in death’. The question we are left with is: why does Jesus delay? If one of us telephoned the NHS to tell them we had serious respiratory problems and showed symptoms of Covid-19, and someone casually responded: ‘this sickness will not end in death, but it is for God’s glory so that Jesus may be glorified through it’, would we be satisfied with this response?

Why then does Jesus not go to Lazarus immediately? Let’s look at the reasons Jesus offers. Jesus told the disciples that he waited *“so that [they] may believe”* (John 11:15), and He told Martha that he waited so she could learn to trust Him as *“the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die”* (John 11:25-26). Fair enough; but why four days? The answer to this one requires further study. Ancient Jewish texts reveal an important belief held by the Jews who were waiting at the tomb of Lazarus. The Jews of this time period believed that “until three days [after death] the soul keeps on returning to the grave, thinking that it will go back [into the body]; but when it sees that the facial features have become disfigured, it departs and abandons it [the body]” (see, e.g. Genesis Rabbah 100:7, Leviticus Rabbah 18:1, and Ecclesiastes Rabbah 12:6). Jesus waited until all hope was lost for those waiting for death’s confirmation. Only then did Jesus raise Lazarus, and the result was stunning amongst those Jews who held these primary beliefs about death and the soul. The text says *‘Therefore many of the Jews’* – maybe the same Jews who were intent on stoning Jesus – *‘put their faith in him’* (John 11:45). The waiting for two days, the four days in the tomb, the absence of Jesus at the time he declares Lazarus’s

condition will not end in death, the prophecy of the dry bones at a time when the Jewish nation is facing certain extinction...The point Ezekiel and John want their readers to derive from all these elaborations is for us to see clearly that with God, nothing is impossible.

When I visited Nepal in November last year, I met a woman called Mitha who had suffered immensely over the years due to her leprosy. She had experienced rejection, separation from her family, endured the loss of a spouse who abandoned her, and was still living in a damaged home as a result of the earthquake in 2015. And yet, Mitha was emphatic about the love she has received from The Leprosy Mission. Mitha may still bear the scars of her leprosy, but she is now living a renewed life even in the midst of her greatest darkness. Ezekiel left no doubt to the reader as to why the Spirit of the Lord might choose to whisk him to the valley of the dry bones. He was taken to a place of extremes; a place where there is no life, not a single sign of it. And it is here, in this place of death, where God brings life to those dry bones, standing on their feet as a vast army. Similarly, the raising of Lazarus occurs at a time when all hope was lost. In both stories, we are being set a scene where there is no hope, life, or power, in order to be shown that, with God, there is hope, life, and power, even to resurrection.

May we too, in this uncertain time, tread this valley with confidence, knowing that power of renewed life made available through Jesus Christ. And may we continue to renew, day by day, our commitments and fellowship to one another, being part of his body here on earth. Amen.

Jarrett Wilson - Gray - Regional manager for the London and the South East of England, TLM England and Wales



“...for the good...” – Part 10

Friends

I want to start these thoughts with a prayer:

Father, hear this little prayer

Reach across the miles from here to there,

So I can feel much closer to those I'm fondest of

And they may know I think of them with

Thankfulness and love.

I came across this little prayer recently and thought that I would like to share it. With all the troubles just now and with so many people “locked down” in their homes, I think that now is a good time to pass it on. One of the great privileges God has given me is the considerable number of friends I have all over the world. Sometimes I am not very good at keeping in touch with all of them, but I do treasure them in my heart and they feature often in my prayers. Sometimes when I cannot sleep (that's not very often) or when I wake up very early in the morning I find it very hard to go back to sleep (that is regularly), I lie and take myself on a tour of the world thinking of all the people I know and in the different countries I visit on this early morning trip. Sometimes names elude me, which is not a new problem although it is maybe getting worse with my old age, but I can visualise them and I know that God knows who they are. It is a real opportunity to bring them to the Lord – I don't know all their situation but our Father does and I just ask that at that time, He will reach out to them and to their situation and bless them.

When I came to live in my lovely spot by the seaside, I started to walk early in the morning when there are not many people on the walkway and I had a regular route and at various places I stopped to pray for specific people and situations. I still do that early morning walk, marvelling at the beauty I see around me and praying at the same spots for the same people and places. I know that many of the people are not in the same places now, but that doesn't matter because God knows what is happening with them today.

I have been very touched by the people who have phoned me during this 'lock down' to see if I am OK and if I need anything. I try to keep in touch with as many people as possible too and still shop for myself and for one other friend, leaving hers on her doorstep. When I do venture into the supermarket I have taken in these troubled times to buying a few packets of biscuits to give to the staff for their teabreaks. The first time I did this I was really surprised at the reaction, one of the two girls there, broke down in tears – she told me that no one ever did anything like that for them and if anyone approached them it was usually to complain or give them abuse because items were missing from the shelves. That reaction has made me keep on doing this and when it is different people on duty the look of surprise on their faces makes it worthwhile. When I hand over the biscuits I always tell them that I am praying for them and I do it as I leave the store.

Please, today wherever you are, remember before the Lord your friends and family members wherever they may be. If you have time, look at your photo albums and remember.

There are many verses of Scripture which would fit well with these thoughts, but I have chosen one from the Psalms, particularly because of our world situation just now:

Psalm 4:1 “Answer me when I call to you, O my righteous God. give relief from my distress (and that of those for whom I have prayed) *be merciful to me and hear my prayer.*” God bless each one of you.

Christine Osman – formerly treasurer of TLMI



Psalm 45

For the director of music. To the tune of "Lilies." Of the Sons of Korah. A maskil. A wedding song.

- ¹My heart is stirred by a noble theme
as I recite my verses for the king;
my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer.
- ²You are the most excellent of men
and your lips have been anointed with grace,
since God has blessed you forever.
- ³Gird your sword on your side, you mighty one;
clothe yourself with splendor and majesty.
- ⁴In your majesty ride forth victoriously
in the cause of truth, humility and justice;
let your right hand achieve awesome deeds.
- ⁵Let your sharp arrows pierce the hearts of the king's enemies;
let the nations fall beneath your feet.
- ⁶Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever;
a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.
- ⁷You love righteousness and hate wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions
by anointing you with the oil of joy.
- ⁸All your robes are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia;
from palaces adorned with ivory
the music of the strings makes you glad.
- ⁹Daughters of kings are among your honored women;
at your right hand is the royal bride in gold of Ophir.
- ¹⁰Listen, daughter, and pay careful attention:
Forget your people and your father's house.
- ¹¹Let the king be enthralled by your beauty;
honor him, for he is your lord.
- ¹²The city of Tyre will come with a gift,
people of wealth will seek your favor.
- ¹³All glorious is the princess within her chamber;
her gown is interwoven with gold.
- ¹⁴In embroidered garments she is led to the king;
her virgin companions follow her—

those brought to be with her.

¹⁵Led in with joy and gladness,
they enter the palace of the king.

¹⁶Your sons will take the place of your fathers;
you will make them princes throughout the land.

¹⁷I will perpetuate your memory through all generations;
therefore the nations will praise you for ever and ever.



Psalm 46

For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. According to alamot. A song.

¹God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.

²Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,

³though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.

⁴There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.

⁵God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day.

⁶Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.

⁷The LORD Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

⁸Come and see what the LORD has done,
the desolations he has brought on the earth.

⁹He makes wars cease
to the ends of the earth.

He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.

¹⁰He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."

¹¹The LORD Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.



“...for the good...” – Part 11

Getting in tune

Genesis 18:22-33

I remember once fasting and praying for a friend who was in trouble. I got on my knees and began to tell the Lord exactly what He should do about it. As I raved on, I realised that what I needed to do was to ask Him what He wanted me to pray! The Lord is so gracious He allowed me to rant and then told me what He saw from His perspective so that I could pray His prayers.

I think this is what is going on with Abraham here. He is getting in tune with the Lord. We forget that we only see the trailer from the film, but the Lord has seen the whole lot. He knows the end from the beginning so of course His prayers will be bigger than ours.

I remember reading about John Wimber and His ministry. He talked about a while year when no one was healed, and His prayers didn't seem to get above the ceiling. As I read, I thought this was God tuning him. It must have been painful and most of us would have given up, but he kept going and that led to his ministry.

At this time, we are driven to our knees, but we do need to get in tune with the Lord in our prayers. We have our short-term prayers of keeping people safe, helping governments with wisdom ... In some ways these are easy but what are the big God issues? There is no doubt, that even if governments remove lock-down it will not be the end. There are so many economic issues that governments will have to deal with as well as people coping with financial loss and grieving.

The interesting thing is that during this time with lockdown and Churches closed the Lord seems to be reaching more people though social media and online services. Plenty of time and opportunity to get tuned with the Lord.

June Nash - June is now retired. She worked for TLM as missionary, trainer and director.



“...for the good...” – Part 12

I will keep you!

“Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.” Rev. 3:10-11

A letter came to the local church of Philadelphia. The town of Philadelphia is called Alahesir today and is situated 120 kilometers east of Izmir in Turkey. It was a very special moment when the church leader opened the letter in front of the congregation. The sender was the apostle John but the real sender was Jesus himself. He gave the church a progress report from his divine perspective and I think it was an exciting moment for the church to listen. The main encouraging message was: I will keep you! I will take care of you!

“You have kept my command.”

Our part of this covenant is to keep the Word of God in our hearts and lives. We should be like Mary who *“treasured up all these things (the Word of God) and pondered them in her heart. Luke 2:19*

“Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching... Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching.” John 14:23-24

Let’s keep his Word and *“hold on to what we have”*. There are many attacks on the Word of God today from different directions but we choose to hold on faithfully to the eternal, living and infallible Word of God.

“I will keep you.”

God has not promised us not to face trials and problems in our life or our fellowship. No, as Christians we share of course the same conditions of life like all other persons. We will meet trials, sicknesses and problems like others but together with God. He will keep us and take care of us!

“Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me.” Ps.50:15

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, 3 though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.”

Ps 46:1, 2, 7

“The LORD will keep you from all harm— he will watch over your life; the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.” Ps 121:7, 8

The Bible is an illustration of the fact that God takes care of his children in times of problems and trials. You think about our models in GT: Abraham, Moses, Joseph, Daniel.....All of them were very close to God but they met so many problems. God was always faithful and helped them in every situation. It’s mentioned about the people of God that *“He shielded him and cared for him; he guarded him as the apple of his eye”* (Deut. 32; 10). It’s great to be the apple of his eye!

Now we are facing a very special and different time of corona virus. I think our time is covered by the words we read in the beginning *“hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth.”*

*We can be sure that God will keep us, take care of us and meet all our needs
as TLM Fellowship and as families.*

Allan Ekstedt, country leader TLM Sweden



End Times! Exciting Times! - Part 1

The end of the world has always been a pressing but also a puzzling question. People hold multiple views on what the future holds out. For some, life on earth will always evolve and never end. For others, man-made catastrophes will destroy the earth, possibly gradually. These are materialistic perspectives of the end times of our world. On the contrary, for the believers, end times are part of God's plan. Jesus Christ reveals to us in *Mark chapter 13* the happenings before and at the end times of our world.

Cataclysmic sorrowful intervening times

The world will go through cataclysmic changes between the ascension and return of Jesus. There will be heightened levels of strife in the world. People will hate each other. There will be conflicts, battles and wars between nations. There will occur tremors, earthquakes and natural disasters. Trauma, destruction and break-down in relationships will happen. The days of plentiful will cease, many will face starvation. The world will be filled with more of sorrow than joy.

These are not signs of end times but beginning of sorrows; occurrences during the intervening period of Jesus's ascension and His second coming. They are precursor to things to come. How long such conditions will last is a mystery. The believers shall remain steadfast in their faith and not be affected by the happenings around them. Only by being yoked to Jesus we can be at rest in the midst of turmoil and trouble in the world and all the distractions associated with it.

End time turmoil is prophesied. It is inevitable. One can presume that these things happen because of Man's drift away from God's grace. They indicate the extent of Man's fall and God's anger/justice. Such troubled time is also an opportune moment for Man to repent and return to fellowship with God since everyone has to give an account for their lives when Jesus returns.

False teachers and preachers

The believers must be alert during the cataclysmic times. In a turbulent world, people seek after anyone who gives them the hope of an assured future. Fear galvanises people to come together. Number of preachers of God's Word will emerge; but many of them will be false teachers. They thrive on the fears of Man in an uncertain world. They will capitalise this for their personal gain by claiming themselves to be the messiahs and saviours of mankind. They proclaim themselves to be God incarnate. Deception becomes all pervasive and deeply entrenched. People will believe them in desperation. The false preachers do not lead the seekers/the lost to Jesus the Saviour but to themselves as their saviours. They appear to be servants of God, but not really so.

Jesus cautions the seekers of truth that there is only one Saviour, Himself. Our faith must remain steadfast only in Him and His Word. We should not put our faith in false preachers of the Word. Test their preaching against the scriptures. Check whether they are seeking their own glory or glory of God. There is only one Jesus who is the way, truth and life and whoever comes to Him will be saved. All other claimants are false. So, seek only His presence, His wisdom, His guidance and His will for one's life.

The timing of Jesus' return

End of the world and the return of Jesus are certain. They are confirmed by Jesus Himself. Everything will happen in a flash, without any warning. The timing of Jesus' returns is known only to the Almighty God and

none else, not even Jesus. Jesus (Son of God/Man) himself had restricted his own knowledge of such timing in obedience to God, since he was a servant in human flesh when he was in this world (Philippians 2:7). The cataclysmic times cannot be used to predict the day and time of return of Jesus. Any predictions and claims by false prophets of such a day/time must not be believed. They are based on occult and astrology and not on the Word of God. God has created the World out of His love. He will bring it to an end according to His purpose and plan. The timing is kept a mystery not to paralyse the thinking of Man, nor to make him choose a permissive lifestyle but to be purposeful in every living moment.

Life in this world is transitory, live it purposefully.

In gratitude, for His glory.

Dr PLN Raju - Former Director (Resource Mobilization) The Leprosy Mission Trust India New Delhi



End Times! Exciting Times! - Part 2

What happens when Jesus returns?

End times will be the second coming of Jesus. He will come in glory and power. He will dispense God's justice. In his first coming Jesus was compassionate towards the sinners. He showed us the path of redemption by putting our faith in His atoning sacrifice on the cross. He has given the opportunity for all sinners, those who have disobeyed God's commands and moved out of the boundaries set by Him to repent and return. When Jesus comes again, those who have trusted Jesus as their personal Saviour and lived according to His tenets given in the Holy Scriptures shall be called/lifted unto Him (*Mark 13:27*). He will come to claim His faithful people back to Himself. He will carry His elect (the believers) in glorified bodies to heavens for eternal fellowship with Him in His house (John 14:2). They live for eternity.

No more time will be given for people to repent and turn to God for His mercy. Either a person will be taken up into the heavens by Jesus himself or left behind on this earth to face eternal damnation and separation from God. The chaff and grain will be separated. None who knew Jesus but not accepted Him as his/her personal Saviour will be spared. All have to give an account of their lives in this world at the end time.

A believer's preparation for the end times

The intervening time between the ascension of Jesus and his return is like a master going away to a far off place leaving his servants in-charge of his house, to do assigned tasks in his absence, till he returns (Mark 13:34). The believers are the servants in the story. Jesus has given us His house (the Church, the House of God), His mission to serve others (Matthew 20:28) and His work of discipleship (Matthew 28:16-20). In one of the parables, Jesus commended the servant who kept on working while his master was away saying "It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns" (Luke 12:43).

Till His return Jesus has given us the opportunity to live for Him and bring glory to His name. We are to preach the Good News of Jesus, the Saviour and His kingdom to all the peoples (Matthew 24:14). Evoke the quest for eternal world in the hearts of people, through words and deeds. Every living human being should know the saving grace of Jesus and the opportunity to put their faith in Jesus as their Saviour (2 Peter 3:9). God gives the abilities and wisdom to fulfil our responsibilities (Ephesians 4:11), (Proverbs 3:7).

The disciples must be the salt and light in the world to bring glory to God (Matthew 5:13-16). But this journey will be tough. The disciples will face persecution while professing their faith in Jesus. They will be "put on the spot" by their adversaries. Be ready to give your testimony when persecuted in many ways. But these are also the opportunities to witness for the love of God and His forgiveness. When challenged/persecuted, speak the words given by the Holy Spirit (Mark 13:11). The Word is His, not mine. Testify to God's grace in one's life with the words He gives. The one who stands firm till the end will be rewarded with life beyond this world (Mark 13:13).

Jesus had intended His followers to actively engage themselves with the occurrences in the challenging times and not be passive. Live a purpose driven life with positive expectation and not be drowned in the sorrows of the world. "*Since everything will be destroyed ... live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God*" (2 Peter 3:11-12). Will the faith of the disciples remain unshaken in troubled times? We need not need

fear the end times when we trust Jesus Christ as the Saviour and Lord. The real question is am I ready for Christ's return? I can be, by turning to Him and putting my faith and trust in Him.

"I know not when Jesus returns; I shall be alert, eager and ready doing His Will meanwhile!"

For His glory, in gratitude.

Dr PLN Raju - Former Director (Resource Mobilization) The Leprosy Mission Trust India New Delhi



What a 'job' God has with each one of us...!

Job 1:1-3,6-12,20-22

Chronologically - one of the oldest books in the Bible!.....

Thematically - one of the most constant themes in the Bible!.....(cf. *John 10:10*)

So what we have here, is a typical human story:

Life is a TRUST (in time and in eternity)

Life is a TEST (God tests us for growth and character development/Satan tempts us to fail)

Life is a TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT (60,70 years...) (Tazne van Wyk, only 9 yrs old!!)

Life can also become a TRANSFORMATION, spiritually dead->spiritually 'born again'!

(Job 1) Job was 'blameless and upright'/God was well-pleased with him/But Satan hated Job!

Suddenly Job loses everything - within a few days!...He is shocked/worships God/doesn't sin!

Job's wife and 3 friends don't really help him much in his shock, grief, devastation + anguish:

.....don't think that counselling such a bewildered person is easy (2Cor.1:3,4)!

But in Chapter 19, Job arrives at somewhat of a 'tipping point' in his "nightmare experience"!

Job is able to quantify 22 grievous losses, that he has recently been experiencing (vv8 – 20) :-

"walled up my way"/"set me in darkness"/"stripped me of my glory"/"taken my crown"/

"broken me down completely"/"stripped me of hope"/"experienced God's wrath against him"

"seen as an enemy of God"/"experienced God's hand against him"/"God's angels against him"

"his brothers/family members/friends, etc. have distanced themselves from him"/

"his servants and acquaintances treat him as a foreigner"/"his wife refrains.....intimacy"/

"his children avoid him"/"children despise him"/"loved ones abhor him or turn against him"/

"his all-round ill-health frightens him"+"he feels he has cheated death by the skin of his teeth"

Do you possibly know someone like this? Someone who has experienced so many losses???...

3 x NOW he cries out to God for MERCY (= 'don't give me what I deserve!')

And from vv23 – 29 we read, Job confessing his FAITH in Almighty God anew.....

.....may we also never lose our God-given faith and humble trust in God Almighty!

So let's reaffirm our personal faith in our Triune God - using *Romans 8:28-39*

In Job's case, he was graciously restored (2nd chance given) (Read Job 42:1-6,10,12-17)

Remember God doesn't owe us anything.....entitlement doesn't sway God.....

Philippians 1:6,21 – "And I am sure of this, that He Who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ".....

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

-Amen!



Psalm 47

For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm.

- ¹ Clap your hands, all you nations;
shout to God with cries of joy.
- ² For the LORD Most High is awesome,
the great King over all the earth.
- ³ He subdued nations under us,
peoples under our feet.
- ⁴ He chose our inheritance for us,
the pride of Jacob, whom he loved.
- ⁵ God has ascended amid shouts of joy,
the LORD amid the sounding of trumpets.
- ⁶ Sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises to our King, sing praises.
- ⁷ For God is the King of all the earth;
sing to him a psalm of praise.
- ⁸ God reigns over the nations;
God is seated on his holy throne.
- ⁹ The nobles of the nations assemble
as the people of the God of Abraham,
for the kings^[c] of the earth belong to God;
he is greatly exalted.



Psalm 48

A song. A psalm of the Sons of Korah.

¹ Great is the LORD, and most worthy of praise,
in the city of our God, his holy mountain.

² Beautiful in its loftiness,
the joy of the whole earth,
like the heights of Zaphon is Mount Zion,
the city of the Great King.

³ God is in her citadels;
he has shown himself to be her fortress.

⁴ When the kings joined forces,
when they advanced together,

⁵ they saw her and were astounded;
they fled in terror.

⁶ Trembling seized them there,
pain like that of a woman in labor.

⁷ You destroyed them like ships of Tarshish
shattered by an east wind.

⁸ As we have heard,
so we have seen
in the city of the LORD Almighty,
in the city of our God:
God makes her secure
forever.

⁹ Within your temple, O God,
we meditate on your unfailing love.

¹⁰ Like your name, O God,
your praise reaches to the ends of the earth;
your right hand is filled with righteousness.

¹¹ Mount Zion rejoices,
the villages of Judah are glad
because of your judgments.

¹² Walk about Zion, go around her,
count her towers,

¹³ consider well her ramparts,
view her citadels,
that you may tell of them
to the next generation.

¹⁴ For this God is our God for ever and ever;
he will be our guide even to the end.



“...for the good...” – Part 13

Preparing for crises

en français voir page suivant SVP

*Jehoshaphat feared, and turned his face to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast through all Judah.
2 Chronicles 20. 3*

Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, was attacked by a huge army and did not know where to turn, if not up! His way of dealing with such a crisis can help us solve the problems we face today. Jehoshaphat "turned his face to seek the Lord", which means that he endeavoured to seek the Lord through prayer. In the same way, when we face difficulties, the best reaction is to beg our Father. As children of God, we can be sure that he loves us, takes care of us, and takes care of the details of our lives.

By the cross and because of the resurrection of Christ, those who put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ were placed in a new relationship with God, who is now their Father (John 20:17; Romans 8: 14-16). God also sent us his Holy Spirit to remain in us, as proof of our salvation, and to be always present with us. He is interested in all aspects of our lives and promises that he will listen to our prayers.

Jehoshaphat was ready to face this crisis because he was used to seek the Lord in various situations. If we are to be prepared for unexpected situations, we must get into the habit of seeking God every day, recognizing both his lordship and our dependence on him. Jehoshaphat feared the Lord, which meant that he honored him and gave him first place. He was also ready to renounce himself by fasting, which he did in complete agreement with the others: “he proclaimed a fast by all Judah”!

In times of crisis, we can try to get out of it ourselves; or find help from those around us, perhaps at the cost of all sorts of compromises with our conscience; or cry out to the Lord. By examining our habits and how we think about life, we can find out if the Lord is at the centre of our lives, or if there are other things. If we start our day thinking of Him rather than our own plans, and if we read the scriptures regularly and apply them to ourselves, we will manifest a heart that fears the Lord, and is willing to seek Him. It’s the best way to prepare for life’s crises.

Reverend Elie FOFOLO - Born on August 5, 1964, son of a Baptist Pastor, both parents died. I am a pastor of vocation and formation, in 2001 I had my degree in Theology at the Protestant University in Congo (U.P.C). After working as a Pastor in the local Church of Kingabwa 1 from 2004 to 2011, I had a meeting with Angelika Piefer who headed the Coordination of the Mission against Leprosy in the Democratic Republic of Congo, from where I had this passion for people affected by Leprosy and I invited Angelika to come to World Leprosy Day in our church on Sunday 29/01/2012, in Kingabwa. This work led us to discover two girls from the same family with signs of leprosy, and their brother ended up being infected, but all three were treated and in good health. This sparked this passion to work as a volunteer in raising awareness, mobilization and the relationship with the local churches of the platform "Church of Christ in Congo" (E.C.C in acronym). - In July 2019, I obtained the Master in Psychotrauma, at the University of Kinshasa, at the Faculty of Medicine. Training that allows me to better listen to and accompany people who suffer trauma and stress for biopsychosocial care. - I am married to only one woman, Madame Espérance since 16/10/1988. From this union God gave us five children including two girls and three boys. Just like Abraham and Sarah, my wife and I, are willing to give up everything and go where the need for the Mission is felt. - Elie Fofolo is currently pastor at the local church of Masina 3, the 15th Congo Baptist Community in Kinshasa

Se préparer aux crises

*Josaphat craignit, et tourna sa face pour rechercher l'Éternel, et proclama un jeûne par tout Juda.
2 Chroniques 20. 3*

Josaphat, roi de Juda, était attaqué par une immense armée et ne savait pas où se tourner, sinon vers le haut! Sa manière d'agir face à une telle crise peut nous aider à résoudre les problèmes qui se présentent à nous aujourd'hui. Josaphat "tourna sa face pour rechercher l'Éternel", ce qui signifie qu'il s'est appliqué à rechercher l'Éternel par la prière. De la même manière, lorsque nous affrontons des difficultés, la meilleure réaction c'est de supplier notre Père. Comme enfants de Dieu, nous pouvons être certains qu'il nous aime, qu'il prend soin de nous, et qu'il s'occupe des détails de nos vies.

Par la croix et à cause de la résurrection de Christ, ceux qui ont mis leur confiance dans le Seigneur Jésus Christ ont été placés dans une nouvelle relation avec Dieu, qui est maintenant leur Père (Jean 20. 17; Romains 8. 14-16). Dieu nous a aussi envoyé son Saint Esprit pour qu'il demeure en nous, comme preuve de notre salut, et pour qu'il soit toujours présent avec nous. Il s'intéresse à tous les aspects de nos vies et il promet qu'il écoutera nos prières.

Josaphat était prêt à affronter cette crise parce qu'il avait pris l'habitude de rechercher l'Éternel en diverses situations. Si nous voulons être préparés à affronter des situations inattendues, il nous faut prendre l'habitude de rechercher Dieu chaque jour, en reconnaissant à la fois sa seigneurie et notre dépendance de lui. Josaphat craignait l'Éternel, cela signifiait qu'il l'honorait et qu'il lui accordait la première place. Il était aussi prêt à renoncer à lui-même en jeûnant, ce qu'il faisait en complet accord avec les autres: "il proclama un jeûne par tout Juda"!

En période de crise, nous pouvons soit chercher à nous en sortir nous-mêmes ou à trouver du secours auprès de ceux qui nous entourent au prix peut-être de toutes sortes de compromis avec notre conscience, soit crier au Seigneur. En examinant nos habitudes et notre manière de concevoir la vie, nous pouvons savoir si le Seigneur est au centre de notre vie, ou si ce sont d'autres choses. Si nous commençons notre journée en pensant à lui plutôt qu'à nos propres plans, et si nous lisons régulièrement les Écritures en nous les appliquant, nous manifesterons un cœur qui craint le Seigneur, et qui est disposé à le rechercher. C'est la meilleure manière de se préparer aux crises de la vie.

Révérend Elie FOFOLO - Né le 05 Aout 1964, fils d'un Pasteur Baptiste les deux parents sont tous morts. Je suis pasteur de vocation et de formation, en 2001 j'ai eu ma licence en Théologie à l'Université Protestante au Congo (U.P.C). Après avoir travaillé comme Pasteur dans l'Eglise locale de Kingabwa 1 de 2004 à 2011, j'ai fait une rencontre avec Angelika Piefer qui dirigeait la Coordination de la Mission contre la Lèpre en République Démocratique du Congo, de là j'ai eu cette passion des personnes affectées par la Lèpre et j'ai invité Angelika de venir faire la Journée Mondiale Lèpre dans notre église le dimanche 29/01/2012, à Kingabwa. Ce travail nous a emmené à découvrir deux fillettes d'une même famille avec des signes de la lèpre et leur frère aussi a fini par être contaminé mais tous trois ont été soignés et sont en bonne santé. Cela suscita cette passion de travailler comme volontaire dans la sensibilisation, la mobilisation et la relation avec les églises locales de la plateforme "Eglise du Christ au Congo" (E.C.C en sigle). - En juillet 2019, j'ai obtenu le Master en Psycho-trauma, à l'Université de Kinshasa, à la faculté de Médecine. Une formation qui me permet de mieux écouter et d'accompagner les personnes qui souffrent des traumatismes et des stress pour une prise en charge biopsychosociale. - Je suis marié à une seule femme, madame Espérance depuis le 16/10/1988. De cette union Dieu nous a donné cinq enfants dont deux filles et trois garçons. - Tout comme Abraham et Sarah, ma femme et moi, sommes disposés de tout abandonner et aller où le besoin de la Mission se fait sentir. - Elie Fofolo est actuellement Pasteur à l'Eglise locale de Masina 3, de la 15^{ème} Communauté Baptiste du Congo à Kinshasa



“Blessed are the peacemakers!”

Those of you who have grandchildren probably can agree with me that we grandparents are learning much more from them than we think we are teaching them...

This was again my experience with my No4 grandchild, Angela (5). She desired me to play her favourite game with her. This is about testing memory, reflex and quickness. 36 cards with image up, two dices, with one you throw the colour, with the other one the figure. The task is to pick up as fast you can the coordinating card.

For long I knew that my speed compared to hers in that is like a snail running race with a rabbit... But recently a new situation occurred and taught deeper lessons for me.

It happened that exceptionally I was also able to find the particular card! Proudly “jumped” on it as fast as I could - and at exactly same time as she did! No one could have told who had grasped the card first, we had both our hands on it. So we sat, a bit blocked... with one hand each on the same card...on two sides of the table... looking into each other’s eyes...

“What shall we do now?” – I asked. “We cannot tell who had touched the card first. How do we move on?”

Fearing her reactions, I thought she would break out in tears, or pull, or fight for the card – a more or less normal reaction for her age. I thought already as a self-defence to offer the card to her, but refused this thought as would not have been fairplay...

But on my surprise: no crying, no shouting, no pulling: she remained smiling.

“I know what!” – she said. “We leave this card laying here as it is and we continue the game. Neither you, nor I will take it. It is neither yours, nor mine, we cannot see who touched it first. Ok? Go on, throw, its your turn.”

“Ok” – I replied, much astonished of the wisdom of this young girl, being able to be generous, just, able to put aside fighting for uncertain gains, step back uncertain of her own advantage, initiating a peaceful and smiling solution in a non-resolvable situation.

Though it was my turn indeed, but I stopped to take time to tell her about all these thoughts. How Jesus taught us to be peacemakers and how difficult it is for us adults, too, to act so in different challenging situations of our life. How brilliantly she demonstrated this hard principle and if continuing like that, she would bring lots of blessing to all those working with her later in her life, and living in her surroundings. “This is called ‘wise’, you know, how you now acted.” – I finished and offered my hand to shake (to congratulate the winner) with her. She was shining...

How much more smiling, blessing, warmth and godliness could be our gain, if in all situations we easily, and naturally acted and reacted as peacemakers – instead of being troublemakers, fighting for “justice”!

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.” Matthew 5:9

Authors in Alphabetical Order

Textuarium

Allan Ekstedt	23 June	Genesis 18,22	22 June
Christine Osman	19 June	2 Chronicles 20,3	29 June
Colin Osborne	2 June	Job 1	26 June
Dan Izzett	1 June	Psalms 3,3	11 June
David Beazley	11 June	Psalms 4,1	19 June
David, king of Israel	6 June	Psalms 41	6 June
Dorothy Owen	16 June	Psalms 42	7 June
Elisabeth Barnett	15 June	Psalms 43	13 June
Elie Fofolo, Rev	29 June	Psalms 44	14 June
James Pender	17 June	Psalms 45	20 June
Jannine Ebenso	3 June	Psalms 46	21 June
Jarrett Wilson-Gray	18 June	Psalms 47	27 June
June Nash	22 June	Psalms 48	28 June
Linda Todd	12 June	Proverbs 1,21	8 June
Marta Risko	4 and 30 June	Isaiah 42,16	17 June
Mollie Clark	10 June	Ezekiel 37,1-14	18 June
Otto Kingsley	26 June	Matthew 5,9	30 June
Peter Laubscher	9 June	Mark 13	24, 25 June
Raju PLN Dr	24, 25 June	Luke 15,29	3 June
Rosemary Tootle	5 June	John 6	15 June
Sons of Korah	7, 14, 20, 21, 27, 28 June	John 11,1-45	18 June
Yuek Ming Poon	8 June	John 20,19-31	2 June
		Romans 8,28	4 June
		1 Cor 10,31	16 June
		2 Cor 3,18	9 June
		Ephesians 3,14-21	1 June
		James 1,2-3	12 June
		Revelation 3,10-11	23 June

The Bridge

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