

Romans 8:18-25 *I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.* (v.18)

How often I look back on my life and see how God has turned the sufferings of my life into good. The painful times of my life have taught me to dig deeper into my relationship with Him, given me experiences to share and encourage others, and revealed my dependence on Him. Charles Spurgeon said, “His past mercies are guarantees for the future.” As I begin to understand how He has continuously been in control in my life, I can begin to realize today’s verse, of considering my present sufferings as part of another future revealed glory—one that I cannot see today but will be revealed in His time. It is important to remind myself that everything that happens in my life passes through the hands of God—He is in control and at work with my present sufferings. Lord help me keep today’s sufferings in perspective knowing that You have caused my past for good and You will do so again in the present and the future.

Number 24:12-25; Psalms 137, 144; Matthew 22:23-40

by Mary Tomlinson

Used with permission from the BIBLE READING FELLOWSHIP
P. O. Box 380, Winter Park, FL 32790

Good News Daily

June 30–July 5, 2008

Monday, June 30

Pray for your pastors’ families.

God’s peace and protection.

A growing love relationship with their spouses.

A commitment to quality and quantity time together.

Matthew 21:12-22 *“Do you hear what the children are saying?” they asked him. “Yes,” replied Jesus, “have you never read, ‘from the lips of children and infants, you have ordained praise’?”* (v.16)

Jesus was responding to the chief priests who were indignant because the children were shouting “Hosanna to the son of David.” As children we were much less inhibited about expressing our reactions to life—both joy and sadness—and there was exuberance to each new day. As adults we can become much more guarded in our feelings and reactions, but Jesus encourages us to become more like the children. Jesus says, “I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it” (Mark 10:16). I remember my son, when he was small, seeing the sunlight streaming through a cloud and saying “Look, Mom, God is talking to someone!” May we each become more childlike in responding openly and with complete trust to our heavenly Dad.

Numbers 22:1-21; Psalm 106:1-18; Romans 6:12-23

Tuesday, July 1

Pray for wisdom for your pastors.

The mind of Christ.

Godly decision-making.

Understanding of biblical truth.

Numbers 22:21-38 *“Well, I have come to you now,” Balaam replied. “But can I say just anything? I must speak only what God puts in my mouth.”* (v.38)

Now there’s a convicting verse! One of our Psalm readings for today, Psalm 120:2-3, says “Save me O LORD, from lying lips and from deceitful tongues. What will he do to you, and what more besides, O deceitful tongue?” We all know the power of the tongue and the words

we use—for blessings or for curses—and for most of us, controlling our tongue is both a challenge and a daily goal. But the Lord has also convicted me of times when I controlled my tongue but the words still burned within my heart. As Jesus chided the Pharisees, it is not just about purifying the outside but the inner self as well. In Matthew 12:34 Jesus tells us, “For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.” May our hearts first be purified in Christ so that today we can say with Balaam: “I must speak only what God puts in my mouth.”

Psalms 120, 121, 122, 123; Romans 7:1-12; Matthew 21:23-32

Wednesday, July 2

Pray for your pastors' ministry focus.

Clear vision.

Commitment to biblical priorities.

Remain true to their God-given gifts and strengths.

Psalm 119:145-176 *I rise before dawn and cry for help; I have put my hope in your word.* (v.147)

When we first wake up in the morning, studies show that our mind is especially receptive to absorb the first messages of the day as we adjust from sleep to alertness. How many of us turn on the news to start our day, and fill our mind with the troubles of this world? Compare the benefits for our mind and soul with spending the first 30 minutes in God's word and in His presence. Jesus often got up early to spend time in His Father's presence—what better example do we need? I have found that a consistent place, with a variety of devotionals and journals, and the stillness of the morning has become an essential part of my day. I know the Lord is always there waiting for me, and in that quiet time my hope for the new day is restored. Being filled with Him is my daily bread, because I know I will need Him no matter what the day may hold.

Numbers 22:41—23:12; Romans 7:13-25; Matthew 21:33-46

Thursday, July 3

Pray for your pastors' health.

Protection of their body and mind.

An extra portion of stamina and strength.

Commitment to stress-releasing activity.

Romans 8:1-11 *The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace.* (v.6)

Joyce Meyer wrote a book called *Battlefield of the Mind*. Like the Pharisees, many of us can live a righteous life externally, but our

mind can be filled with pride, fears, and a critical opinion of others—it is a battlefield between our own ears! Keeping our mind on God's word and His perspective about ourselves and others and allowing His peace to fill our thoughts *is* life. It takes an intentional focus to fill my mind with His peace and not allow the corrupt ideas of the world or my own selfish nature to silently creep in. Romans 8:9 goes on to say, “You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you.” It is an issue of control: who will control my mind today and what I think, my own selfishness, other people's actions, the world's opinions? Lord may *You* control my mind today so that I will be filled with Your Spirit and life.

Numbers 23:11-26; Psalms 131, 132, 133; Matthew 22:1-14

Friday, July 4

Pray for your pastor's spiritual growth.

A heart for God and the lost.

Fresh biblical insights.

Personal devotions not related to sermon preparations.

Psalm 142 *I cry aloud to the LORD; I lift up my voice to the LORD for mercy. I put my complaint before him; before him I tell my trouble.* (vv.1-2)

I love David and his honesty with God in the Psalms. Throughout the Psalms we experience the variety of his emotions—from highest jubilation to deepest despair and the honest cries of a man trying to live for God in the pains and joys of life. Growing up, I was fearful of God and afraid to approach Him at all, but came to appreciate the example of David and have learned to cry aloud to God, even “putting my complaint before Him.” Some of my closest moments with God have come when I was angry at life and Him—I felt I was doing everything according to His plan and things were not going well. If you are struggling today, are you afraid of crying out to God and putting your complaint before Him? Read again how David talked to God and dare to be really honest with Him about where you are and how you need Him to rescue you. You will be surprised at His loving response.

Numbers 24:1-13; Psalm 140; Romans 8:12-17; Matthew 22:15-22

Saturday, July 5

Pray for your pastors' purity.

Pure motives.

Pure thought-life and faithfulness to their spouses.