

“Let everything that hath breath praise the LORD” (Psalm 150:6).
Psalm 69; Acts 2:1-21; Matthew 28:1-10

Good News Daily

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Saturday, August 2

Pray for your pastors' purity.

Pure motives.

Pure thought-life and faithfulness to their spouses.

Judges 5:19-31 *And the land had rest forty years.* (v.31b)

After Deborah finished praising the Lord, her land had rest for forty years. Those words remind us of the First World War which was called “the war to end all wars.” But within another generation came the Second World War, and since then have followed other wars. Will they never cease?

The clue may be found at the beginning of the next chapter, which says “The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years” (6:1). It was evil that brought war again!

Can we ask “What is going on in our society? Is God being neglected and are His commandments being disobeyed?” Before we point to others, let's point to ourselves. In addition let's ask “What have we done to spread the good news of Jesus?” Think: If we sent as many missionaries overseas to preach the Gospel as we have sent soldiers overseas to fight, would the result be different?

With our temporary rest, let's turn to the Lord!

Psalms 75, 76; Acts 2:22-36; Matthew 28:11-20

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Monday, July 28

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.

Joshua 24:16-33 *And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the LORD.* (v.21)

Bill stood before the altar and promised to take Sally as his wife no matter what happened. Yet twenty years later, he left her for a younger woman. His vow was good, but his desires were stronger. We make our promise to God at our Confirmation. We swear that we will be true to Him come what may. But our desires can overcome us. The love of other things can enter our lives and we leave Him.

Do you remember what happened to Peter? Boldly, he promised that he would never leave Jesus (Matthew 26:35). Though he was serious about it, he didn't realize his own weakness and the strength of the Devil's temptation, and he fell terribly. Later, he must have been glad to realize that Jesus predicted it all (Matthew 26:34) and would later restore him (John 21:15-17).

May He guard us, not from making promises to Him, but from making them lightly and thoughtlessly! “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Corinthians 10:12).

Psalms 56, 57, 58; Romans 16:1-16; Matthew 27:24-31

Tuesday, July 29

Pray for wisdom for your pastors.

The mind of Christ.

Godly decision-making.

Understanding of biblical truth.

Judges 2:1-15, 11-23 *And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger.* (v.12)

What are gods? Aren't they things we look up to and trust and hope will bring us satisfaction? As in the time of the Israelites, so it is today. When we abandon the Lord, we turn to other gods. Just think of our

attachment to cars, clothes, candy, coffee, cards, and computers—to say nothing of alcohol and drugs, sex and nicotine, gambling and sports, the internet and TV, and of money itself. All of these are gods of our society. They are more powerful because they aren't recognized.

St Augustine said, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O God; and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in Thee." Nothing and no one can satisfy our hearts but Jesus!

I need to pray, and perhaps you do too: Lord, You said "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." So make me forsake all false and inferior gods that are turning my heart from You, and direct me to put my whole trust in You.

Psalms 61, 62; Romans 16:17-27; Matthew 27:32-44

Wednesday, July 30

Pray for your pastors' ministry focus.

Clear vision.

Commitment to biblical priorities.

Remain true to their God-given gifts and strengths.

Judges 3:12-30 *And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD.* (v.12)

A terrible car accident occurred in a village near my home. In this accident a young girl was killed because her driver was speeding on the highway. At her funeral I warned the congregation about the danger of breaking the speed limit. That had some effect and drivers in the area did slow down. But in a couple of weeks they forgot and speeded up again.

The Israelites had been reminded of God's goodness in bringing them into the Promised Land and had been warned about following other gods. They boastfully promised their obedience to Him, but soon turned to other gods and served them. Now we see them taking it one step further and actually doing evil.

Are we like that? Once we get away from God and follow our own desires, we can run into trouble. It may be an accident or a problem. One thing or another wakes us up. But after a while we return to our old ways. And we are ripe for God's judgment.

Our Father in Heaven, please deliver us from evil.

Psalms 72; Acts 1:1-14; Matthew 27:45-54

Thursday, July 31

Pray for your pastors' health.

Protection of their body and mind.

An extra portion of stamina and strength.

Commitment to stress-releasing activity.

Judges 4:4-23 *And she said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh.* (v.9)

Remember the lad who brought his lunch to Jesus (John 6:9-11)? By them Jesus fed over 5,000 people. That was help from an unlikely source.

Here, we read of two women who saved the Israelites. One was Deborah, a prophetess. She directed them to go to war with their enemies and risked her life in going with them. The other was Jael, a homekeeper, who used her womanly guile to attract the enemies' general to her home and then got rid of him. Both women were unlikely sources of help.

Do we feel up against it? Are our problems immense and our resources small? Out of the blue, God can send us help. It may come from an unlikely source and seem to be of little value—like little Samuel warning Eli of danger to his people (1 Samuel 3:18), or the young girl getting word to Naaman of how he could be cured (2 Kings 5:3). But if we accept it, God will bring us blessing.

What is God offering us today to help with our problems?

Psalms 70, 71; Acts 1:15-26; Matthew 27:55-66

Friday, August 1

Pray for your pastor's spiritual growth.

A heart for God and the lost.

Fresh biblical insights.

Personal devotions not related to sermon preparations.

Judges 5:1-18 *Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day, saying, Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves.* (vv.1-2)

Have you ever written a poem? Was it about yourself or another person? Or was it about some significant event that happened to you or even about God Himself? That is what Deborah and Barak did. They recognized, though their people had sinned, that God had delivered them from their enemies. In fact they were so thrilled by this experience that they set their words to music and burst into song—for music has the ability to take words and arouse feelings. By cadence and repetition, it impresses these words and feelings into our memories.

So why don't we ask "What has God done in my life or in the lives of my family, friends or neighborhood? Is it worth talking or writing or singing about?"

This is called giving a testimony. We may be shy and feel inadequate for it. But if our words come from our heart, they will have power. Why don't we try it?