

*Good News Daily*

**Volume XIX**

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**Number 33**

**Sunday, August 18**

Psalm 118 *Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.* (v.1 NIV)

Why in the world would God love me? That question looms large whenever I find myself struggling with habitual sin, or feelings of unworthiness and disappointment. Why, God? Why do You bother?

Today's readings hint at the reason. God loves us because He promised to. It is that simple.

God entered into a covenant with Himself in order to guarantee His promises, including that "all peoples on earth will be blessed through (Abram)." God swore an oath to Himself and conducted a blood sacrifice to demonstrate, by word and deed, the seriousness of His intent. That means if God breaks His promise, He would stop being God!

God's love for us is all about Him! When we struggle with feelings of being unlovable the problem is in the receiver, not the transmitter. In a poem on sin, Michel Quoist refines the psalmist's refrain, "His love endures forever" this way: "Do you think there is a limit to God's love? Ask my pardon and get up quickly. You see, it's not falling that is the worst, but staying on the ground."

2 Samuel 17:1-23; Psalm 118; Galatians 3:6-14; John 5:30-47

*ANGLICAN CYCLE:* Pray for the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, The Most Revd Thabo Makgoba, Archbishop of Capetown and Primate of Southern Africa

*DIOCESAN CYCLE:* St. Andrew's Church, Edwardsville; Ndala Mission, Tanzania, Rev. Samwel Ivata; The Mission of St. Mary The Virgin, Villa Maria del Triunfo, Lima, Peru & supported missions, The Rev. Aurelio Rodriguez, Priest in Charge.

**Monday, August 19**

Psalm 106:1-18 *But they soon forgot what he had done and did not wait for his plan to unfold.* (v.13)

It's amazing to see coastal hurricane sites being rebuilt. Forgetfulness is a feature of humanity.

I've cried out for God's help only to admit later that had I remained closer to Him no crisis would have arisen. "Lord, don't let me stray so far," I've prayed afterward, soon to forget. Sometimes it's due to pride or rebellion, but often it's simply neglect. All relationships suffer from lack of intimacy!

Richard Foster's "Covenant Prayer" said it well: "Blessed Savior, I pace back and forth at the altar of commitment. I really do want a fixed habit of prayer. At least, that is what I want right now. I'm not sure if that is what I will want two weeks from now. I do know that without some kind of consistent communion with you I will not know holy obedience. So, as best I can, I promise to set aside time regularly for prayer, meditation, and spiritual reading. Strengthen me in this covenant. Help me to so delight in your presence that I will want to come home to you often." Amen!

2 Samuel 17:24—18:8; Acts 22:30—23:11; Mark 11:12-16

*ANGLICAN CYCLE:* Okinawa (*Japan*) The Rt Revd David Eisho Uehara; Bukuru (*Nigeria*) The Rt Revd Jwan Zhumbes; Keewatin (*Canada*) The Rt Revd David Norman Ashdown

*DIOCESAN CYCLE:* Birthday of The Rev. Dr. Arnold R. Hoffman, Sebring, FL; Wedding anniversary of The Rev. Canon Timothy and Mary Hallett, Bloomington, IN.

## **Tuesday, August 20**

Psalm 121 *I lift up my eyes to the mountains—where does my help come from?* (v.1)

This psalm holds a special place in my heart. It's the one read during our wedding in 1979. Its significance changed years later when I learned that this verse is an example of biblical sarcasm.

The local practice at the time of the writing of this psalm was to erect idols and altars on high places throughout Israel. Such places were repulsive to God. Times of revival were often accompanied by campaigns to tear down the high places (i.e. Leviticus 26:30, 2 Kings 18:4, and Isaiah 36:7).

After becoming a Christian, I gradually came to realize that I still maintained "high places" in my life. Horoscopes and superstitions were but two examples of baggage that I brought with me into my redeemed existence. When I become aware of these vestiges of my "old flesh" I consciously and deliberately challenge them as a form of self-discipline. It may annoy some not to hear "God bless" after sneezing (a superstition from times of plague), but it reminds me of verse 2: "My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth."

*ANGLICAN CYCLE:* Oklahoma (*The Episcopal Church*) Vacant; Bunbury (*Australia*) The Rt Revd Dr Ian Coutts

*DIOCESAN CYCLE:* Wedding anniversary of The Rev. Richard I. and Patricia Lewis, Danville.

2 Samuel 18:9-18; Psalms 120, 122, 123; Acts 23:12-24; Mark 11:27—12:12

## **Wednesday, August 21**

Psalm 119:145-176 *Let me live that I may praise you, and may your laws sustain me.* (v.175)

What a remarkable request. How often in our culture and even in our churches do we hear just the opposite: “Let me decide what’s best for me.”

It is a true saying, “The more things change the more they stay the same.” Humanity continues wrestling with the temptation in the Garden— “God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:5).

Since the beginning we’ve wanted to be master of our own destiny; skeptical of God and His love for us. We want to indulge ourselves with things that promise fulfillment, pleasure, or understanding.

God has a better way to live. Culturally it’s not often popular or even seems counter-intuitive. But if we’re willing to trust Him, we will grow in “the knowledge and love of God” and realize that His laws do, indeed, sustain us while the world’s ways lead to destruction.

“May my tongue sing of your word, for all your commands are righteous” (v.172). Trust Him today in whatever you face.

*ANGLICAN CYCLE:* Okrika (*Nigeria*) The Rt Revd Tubokosemie Atere;

Bungoma (*Kenya*) The Revd George Mechumo

*DIOCESAN CYCLE:* O God, we ask for power, but even more for grace.

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

## **Thursday, August 22**

Psalm 132 *LORD remember David and all his self-denial.* (v.1)

The word “remember” has an important role throughout the Old Testament. Often, it’s directed toward God’s people. They are exhorted to bring to mind their experiences with Him in order to repent of their sin, be grateful for His blessings, or be spurred to action. Sometimes, as in today’s psalm, the word is directed to God— as if He were capable of forgetting!

Earlier this week we mediated on the covenantal love of God. This loyal affection, promised by word and deed, is unbreakable. Were God to break covenant, He would cease to be God. Asking God to remember is not to suggest that He forgot. He is constantly and continually attentive to His covenant. In the Bible, those who ask God to remember become strengthened in their own faith (i.e. Judges 16:28, 1 Samuel 1:11).

I’ve learned in my walk with Jesus that prayer changes me. By asking God to “remember” we open ourselves up to contemplating His faithfulness and powerful works in our life, become resolved in our reliance on Him, and walk confidently in “knowledge and love.”

2 Samuel 19:1-23; Psalms 131, 133; Acts 24:1-23; Mark 12:28-34  
*ANGLICAN CYCLE:* Oleh (*Nigeria*) The Rt Revd John Usiwoma Aruakpor;  
Bunyoro-Kitara (*Uganda*) The Rt Revd Samuel Kahuma  
*DIOCESAN CYCLE:* Birthday of Elisabeth, wife of the Rev. Dr. Thomas W.  
Langford, Springfield; Birthday of Betsy, widow of The Rev. Harry G. Newman,  
Bellevue, WA. Pray for Diocese of Springfield Cursillo 37, Toddhall.

### **Friday, August 23**

Psalm 140 *May burning coals fall on them; may they be thrown into the fire, into miry pits, never to rise.* (v.10)

Who can honestly say that this thought hasn't ever crossed our minds or lips? Whether out of resentment, jealousy, perhaps even zealotry for the Lord, we can be tempted to recite the psalmist's petition while thinking of others.

Tying in today's reading from Acts, we see Paul being persecuted. Imprisoned unfairly, he remains under house arrest for over two years by a ruler who anticipates a bribe. While we do not know all that Paul contemplated during this period of captivity, we do know that he used much of the time to share his personal testimony of faith in Jesus Christ to the provincial governor, his wife, and dignitaries.

Perhaps it was during this period of persecution that Paul considered the imprecations of the psalm and was transformed by the Holy Spirit to realize that those same coals on those same heads could present a fragrant offering to the Lord (Romans 12:20).

Rather than spending time concocting tortures for our enemies, pray God's blessings on them and be liberated! "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21).

2 Samuel 19:24-43; Psalm 142; Acts 24:24—25:12; Mark 12:35-44  
*ANGLICAN CYCLE:* Kentucky (*The Episcopal Church*) The Rt Revd Terry White; Kericho (*Kenya*) The Rt Revd Ernest Kiprotich Ng'eno; Khartoum (*Sudan*) The Most Revd Ezekiel Kumir Kondo (*Primate*)  
*DIOCESAN CYCLE:* Birthday of The Rev. Jeffrey F. Kozuszek, Centralia; Pray for Diocese of Springfield Cursillo 37, Toddhall.  
*ST. MATTHEW'S:* John Stoffer's birthday.

### **Saturday, August 24**

2 Samuel 23:1-7, 13-17 *"If my house were not right with God, surely he would not have made with me an everlasting covenant, arranged and secured in every part."* (v.5a)

Have you picked up a theme in our meditations this week? The truth of God's covenant didn't just coincidentally appear in our readings—it is a vital component in God's revelation of Himself and our understanding of Him.

Beginning with Adam, then Noah, Abram, and David, God makes, clarifies, and refines His ultimate promise: To destroy our enemy and to restore us to fellowship with Him. This is all made possible in the finished work of God Himself—Jesus Christ!

In Thursday's Gospel reading, Jesus boils down the Law: Love God and love your neighbor. Once we are forgiven through the blood of Christ, we are capable of truly loving God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to love others.

Take the time to compare the blessings in Deuteronomy 28 with Psalm 144. This is an awesome truth and one that we must intentionally take hold of each day. Appropriate your birthright. Set fear aside. Live boldly in Christ! Put your house in order, for He has made with you an everlasting covenant, arranged and secured in every part!

Psalms 137, 144; Acts 25:13-27; Mark 13:1-13

*ANGLICAN CYCLE:* Kibondo (*Tanzania*) The Rt Revd Sospeter Ndenza; Kigali (*Rwanda*) The Rt Revd Louis Muvunyi; Kigeme, The Rt Revd Assiel Musabyimana

*DIOCESAN CYCLE:* Admission of Diocese of Illinois by General Convention, 1835; Feast of Title, St. Bartholomew's, Granite City; The Rev Jon E. Griffin, West Frankfort, Ordination to the Priesthood. Pray for Diocese of Springfield Cursillo 37, Toddhall.

*by Mark Sholander*

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**Pray for** the sick and those in distress: Charlie, Margret L., Allan H., James G.

**Pray for** the Faithful Departed: Daniel T., Justin P.

**Pray for** those living in nursing homes and other shut-ins: Dale B., Barb W., and Margaret P.

**Pray for:** The Diocese of Tabora, Anglican Church of Tanzania, The Rt. Rev. Elias Chakupewa, the clergy and people. The Missionary Diocese of Peru, The Rt. Rev. Alejandro Mesco. Fr. Kari Marcelle, the clergy and people of Holy Trinity St. Vincent. Fr. Dave and all clergy, for whom we light the candle on the west side of the Altar.