

Good News Daily

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Sunday, May 30

Deuteronomy 11:1-12 *Understand today that it is not your children who experienced or saw the discipline of the LORD your God.* (v.2 CSB)

One of the best songs in the musical *Hamilton* is “Who Lives, Who Dies, Who Tells Your Story.” Sung after the untimely death of Alexander Hamilton, the song relates how his wife Eliza spent the next fifty years interviewing his associates, collecting his letters, and being a witness his life. She wanted his remarkable contributions to this country to be remembered, and she did it by “telling his story.”

Moses outlived nearly all of the people who’d been freed from Egypt, but he couldn’t live forever. As he neared death, he knew how easy it would be for the coming generations—those who never experienced slavery or the years of wandering—to forget. He knew how important it was for the witnesses to “tell God’s story” to their children.

We’ve also been witnesses to the Lord’s work in our lives. Maybe it’s not a burning bush or wandering forty years in the wilderness, but it is just as important. Consider telling someone how the Lord has worked in your life. Only you have experienced your unique part of God’s story.

Psalms 63, 98; Revelation 10:1-11; Matthew 13:44-58

Monday, May 31

2 Corinthians 5:11—6:2 *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.* (v.17 ESV)

This passage is one of the most encouraging of Paul’s writings. He uses the language of vine dressers who graft new shoots on to time-tested root stock to bring about a new creation in Christ. But one thing is often overlooked in this joyful passage: in order for a new thing to be born, something else has to die.

As a prayer minister, I watched as people brought their old, soul-destroying grievances to the Lord in prayer. And I watched some of them walk right back out holding tight to these grievances. Some felt they offered protection from a destructive situation. Others received their identity through them. For some it was simply habit, while others wanted “someone to pay.” But they all had one thing in common: not trusting Jesus to cut off this old root to allow for new growth.

My story was the same. For decades a tough root of bitterness choked my heart. I did not trust the Lord to defend me against those who sought my soul. But when I finally repented of this mistrust, I felt a giant weight lifted from my heart.

There are always those prowling around seeking my soul, but now I trust the Lord to protect me. If you’re clinging to an old root, don’t wait decades like I did. Repent of it *today!*

Deuteronomy 11:13-19; Psalms 41, 52; Luke 17:1-10

Tuesday, June 1

Luke 17:11-19 *As he entered a village there, ten men with leprosy stood at a distance, crying out, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back to Jesus, shouting, “Praise God!”* (vv.12-13, 15 NLT)

Until modern times, leprosy was an incurable disease that isolated you from everyone and everything you loved. If you contracted it, you instantly lost your job and your family, along with any hope of survival. Your only identity was Leper. You were truly and horribly alone as the disease slowly ate away at your body. That’s why Jesus healing ten lepers at once must have been such an amazing event.

And yet, nine didn’t return to thank Christ for healing them. Maybe one had a sick child at home. Maybe another wanted to forget the whole horrible experience, which also meant forgetting the curing

part. Maybe another wanted to catch the last game of March Madness (okay, this isn't accurate, but you get the point). Probably all these men felt they had solid reasons for not returning to thank Jesus, but at the heart of all their excuses lives a disease far more deadly than leprosy: Ingratitude.

Not being grateful for the blessings from God devours happiness and joy. It can ruin anything—even miracles.

Deuteronomy 12:1-12; Psalm 45; 2 Corinthians 6:3—7:1

Wednesday, June 2

Psalm 119:49-72 *At midnight I rise to give you thanks for your righteous laws.* (v.62 NIV)

I am not one to rise at midnight and give thanks to God for His righteous laws. I'm also not one to rise in the morning or to pause at noon to do it. All too often my prayers contain all the enthusiasm of reciting the alphabet.

But when I fall into this indifference, I remember "Pangur Ban." Written by an anonymous Irish Monk in the 9th century, this wonderful poem compares the scholar's work to the activities of his pet cat.

I and Pangur Ban my cat,
'Tis a like task we are at:
Hunting mice is his delight,
Hunting words I sit all night.

Both the nameless monk and the psalmist knew that reading Scripture is a joyful experience. Today, I invite you to join Pangur Ban and enjoy the hunt!

Deuteronomy 13:1-11; 2 Corinthians 7:2-16; Luke 17:20-37

Thursday, June 3

Psalm 50 *Call on me in a day of trouble: I will rescue you and you will honor me.* (v.15 CSB)

I'm writing this during the summer of 2020, when the entire country seems to be burning. It's a frightening time, but it is also nothing new. Psalm 50 gives voice to God's view of rebellion, both in the community and in the human heart. It is a sobering psalm, but also an encouraging one, because it offers the Lord's remedy: "Call on me in a day of trouble: I will rescue you and you will honor me."

"A day of trouble" is a blessed time because we know that our *only* hope is God. As Stuart Townsend's modern hymn proclaims, "In Christ alone my hope is found. He is my light my strength, my song. This cornerstone, this solid ground, firm through the fiercest drought and storm."

Storms come and go, but Jesus is always our rescuer. "Days of trouble" reveal this precious truth.

Deuteronomy 16:18-20, 17:14-20; 2 Corinthians 8:1-16; Luke 18:1-8

Friday, June 4

Psalm 54 *For strangers are attacking me; violent people are trying to kill me. They care nothing for God. But God is my helper. The Lord keeps me alive!* (vv.3-4 NLT)

I was born physically disabled. Eventually everything worked out, but during my first seven years I wasn't able to keep up with the other kids physically. And kids, being kids, bullied me mercilessly. I still remember them circling me on the playground and gleefully yelling out insults. I knew some of these children—some had even been my friends—but at that moment they were violent strangers attacking me with their painful words.

Yet it was in that terrible moment that I first heard the Lord's voice: "Don't believe them. Believe me," He said. I knew nothing of theology, but I knew that this voice offered life and friendship, not death and shame. I've followed it ever since.

Maybe someone reading this is going through a terrible moment. If so, turn to God. A few millennia ago David turned to Him, and a few decades ago I turned to Him. Both King David and I found a mighty advocate and a lifegiving defender who will never desert us. You will too!

Deuteronomy 26:1-11, Psalm 40; 2 Corinthians 8:16-24; Luke 18:9-14

Saturday, June 5

Luke 18:15-30 *“In fact, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God!”* (v.25 NLT)

My parents passed on many good qualities to me, but my favorite is a sense of humor. No matter how tough life got (and it got pretty tough sometimes), we were always able to find something to laugh about in the situation. Humor makes life’s hard lessons easier to learn.

Jesus also inherited a great sense of humor from his Father. After devastating the rich young ruler with the truth about worshiping money above God, he followed it up with a hysterical illustration of a fat, wobbly, over-loaded camel trying to squeeze through a narrow city gate (the Needle Gate, which still exists in Jerusalem). It’s a very funny image that everyone would have understood, especially since I suspect the rich young ruler was a bit fat and wobbly himself.

Mark’s Gospel tells this same story, but he adds that Jesus loved the man (Mark 10:21). Christ could have condemned the young ruler, but instead his insight might have helped the man see his own folly and repent. Humor makes life’s hard lessons easier to learn. And, frankly, who among doesn’t have an over-loaded camel or two that needs unpacking?

Deuteronomy 29:2-15, Psalm 55; 2 Corinthians 9:1-15

by Ruth Owen

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