

Nudges of the Spirit

Meditations for February 1st to February 7th



Nudges of the Spirit is currently a ministry of Deacon Carolyn Quinnett and Denise Bersos.
This week's selections have been written by Carolyn.

Sunday, February 1st Micah 6:1-8 / Psalm 15 / 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 / Matthew 5:1-12 *(written by Carolyn)*

Micah 6:8 *He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*

One commentator I read stated that in this verse, the Lord does not require any more of us than what would be the minimum requirement for society to run smoothly. If that is the case, how are we doing? As I write these words, I am keeping company with my husband as he is receiving the first of his infusion treatments. So far in this journey, everyone we have met has been warm, kind, helpful and very supportive—from the doctors to the nurses, technicians and receptionists. We've had many well wishes from friends, relatives and clergy. Although it's easy to look on a broad scale at what's going on in our county and deride the animosity and division, I have to say on a personal microscopic level, the Lord's requirements as listed above are being realized. Praise the Lord for being in the small details.

Thank you, Jesus!

Monday, February 2nd (The Presentation of Our Lord) Malachi 3:1-4 / Psalm 84 or 24:7-10 / Hebrews 2:14-18 / Luke 2:22-40 *(written by Carolyn)*

Malachi 3:2 *But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap ...*

In biblical times, a fuller was a person responsible for cleaning and whitening cloth. The term "fullers' soap" refers to a strong alkaline substance used in the laundering process to remove dirt and impurities from garments. Remember, there were no washing machines back then, so the process often involved beating the garments against a rock in addition to using water and soap. Nowadays we have fancy machines to do the hard work for us. However, Malachi's focus wasn't on laundry but on purifying the descendants of Levi – the priestly tribe who offered sacrifices in the temple. That doesn't let the rest of us off the hook. We all need a good spiritual bath every now and again. Hopefully it doesn't involve being hit against a rock!

Jesus, cleanse me of my secret faults. Amen

Tuesday, February 3rd Genesis 21:1-21 / Psalm 61, 62 / Hebrews 11:13-22 / John 6:41-51 *(written by Carolyn)*

Psalm 62:2 *He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall never be shaken.*

These same words are repeated in verse 6 of this psalm. In between the two the writer talks about people and their verbal attacks and spreading of falsehoods. Yesterday I mentioned that laundry had to be beaten against a rock for cleaning purposes. Today's psalm mentions a rock also, but one we can stand on when we feel as though we are being attacked. While no one likes to be the victim of lies, slanders or physical assaults; it is good to know that, when they happen, our strength comes from the Lord Himself. His love for us is solid – not something that can be worn away or eroded. For that, we give praise and thanks.

Thank you, Jesus, for being our rock and salvation. Amen

Wednesday, February 4th Genesis 22:1-18 / Psalm 72 / Hebrews 11:23-31 / John 6:52-59 *(written by Carolyn)*

Hebrews 11:29 *By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned.*

Sometimes in scripture the term “sea” is synonymous with chaos. So, if we use that definition the Israelites passed through chaos by God’s grace, while the Egyptians perished in it. I remember reading an article at some point where it was stated that not everyone who crossed the Red Sea noticed the miracle that was happening around them because they were too busy looking down at their feet rather than noticing where they were. I wonder if we do that today when we get so caught up in the chaos that is swirling around us that we can’t see the miracle that God is giving us right in front of our eyes? God reaches out to us in our disorder to remind us that He is with us – even when things seem out of control.

Thank you, Lord, for being with us. Amen

Thursday, February 5th Genesis 23:1-20 / Psalm 71 / Hebrews 11:32–12:2 / John 6:60-71 *(written by Carolyn)*

Psalm 71:23 *My lips will shout for joy when I sing praises to you; my soul also, which you have rescued.*

The other day I was sitting in the waiting room for a medical facility playing a Sudoku game on my phone when I noticed a woman being quite vocal about her condition speaking to no one in particular. Then I noticed someone from across the rather large room was playing “How Firm a Foundation” on their phone quite loudly. Before I realized it, the loud woman was standing in a corner quietly singing along to the hymn being played on the other person’s phone. I love how music can soothe our souls when we are disquieted. It doesn’t have to be a popular song or current piece. This particular one was written in 1787, yet it continues to speak to people today.

Lord, thank you for the musicians among us. Amen

Friday, February 6th Genesis 24:1-27 / Psalm 69:1-23(24-30)31-38 / Hebrews 12:3-11 / John 7:1-13 *(written by Carolyn)*

Hebrews 12:7 *Endure trials for the sake of discipline. God is treating you as children; for what child is there whom a parent does not discipline?*

Perhaps there should be an additional beatitude that specifically reads, “Blessed are you who are being disciplined, for you are a child of God.” In the series “The Chosen” there is a dialogue between Peter and Jesus right before Peter steps out of the boat to walk towards Jesus. As part of the verbal exchange, Jesus points out to Peter that yes, He allows His disciples to go through difficult times because it strengthens them – in other words, it disciplines them. Think about it; if life were a bed of roses once we accepted Christ as our Lord, how would we be able to stand against the darkness of this world. How would we be able to walk alongside others in their own difficult times? We would not have the strength to do so. While our darkness, our being disciplined, is not easy at the time – we are not alone. The Lord is with us. Praise Him for His presence.

Thank you, Jesus! Amen

Saturday, February 7th Genesis 24:28-38, 49-51 / Psalm 75, 76 / Hebrews 12:12-29 / John 7:14-36 *(written by Carolyn)*

Genesis 24:28 *Then the girl ran and told her mother’s household about these things.*

I had to smile when I read the words cited here. Picture this in your mind: Rebekah had most likely been going about her usual routine when she met a man – the servant of Abraham – at the well and suddenly she has a marriage proposal to a man she has never met. Now, her day is anything but ordinary and she’s the recipient of new jewelry, so she runs to tell her mother. I’m sorry, I just can’t relate to the culture of the time. What I can relate to is wanting to share good news with someone.

The first verse of the song “I Speak Jesus” says this: “I just wanna speak the name of Jesus / Over every heart and every mind / ‘Cause I know there is peace within Your presence /

I speak Jesus.” To me, those words reflect that Jesus is the best news we can ever imagine. May we be so bold as to share His good news.

Open my lips, O Lord. Amen

