

The Living God
By Sharon W. Better

Today's Treasure

O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob! Selah
Psalm 84:8

O Lord of hosts, blessed is the one who trusts in you!
Psalm 84:12

A few years ago my husband had surgery that didn't end well. No doubt, his surgery is in the "win" column because the doctors successfully took care of the problem he was experiencing. But the trade off dramatically changed his life. Not only did he lose hearing in one of his ears, he lives with constant dizziness and exhaustion since his brain has to work really hard to compensate for the damaged nerves. He is in the 1% of patients who experience devastating after effects and according to his world-renown surgeon, Chuck is the only one of his over 1000 patients whose body has been so dramatically affected. We have been to numerous doctors, seeking answers and plans of action. According to his surgeon, because his reaction is so rare, little study has been done to try to find answers or a road to healing. Walking drains his energy. Walking at night is almost impossible.

His condition radically changed our retirement plans. We are learning a new normal once more. He is fierce in his refusal to give in. He keeps moving, taking on projects he probably should allow others to do but if he stops, he will spend his life in a recliner. He cannot give in.

Be assured, though our lives are limited, every day the Lord gives us extreme blessings and we enjoy life in ways many cannot. We are grateful for His good gifts and we will never take them for granted. We live in a broken world. No matter what the prosperity preachers tell you, Scriptures teach rain falls on the good and the bad. Bad things happen to God's people. The difference is we do not walk these pathways alone. He sees and He provides what we need.

After finishing up yesterday's devotional, it was a sunny, low humidity Florida day so I encouraged Chuck to play nine holes of golf. We hadn't played in a long time so this would be a test of his strength. By the second hole, Chuck needed help getting off the

tee box. He emphatically refused to quit, saying he wanted to break through the dizziness. But this was not to be. By the end of the sixth hole, we decided to quit.

I had such high hopes the time outside and on the golf course would encourage Chuck. I didn't take into consideration he was also recovering from a cold so his energy level was even less. Chuck loves golf but has little confidence he will be able to play as he did before the surgery. I hate what the surgery did to my husband. I grieve over what he has lost, what we have lost. Here is where the devotional on the Lord of Hosts influenced my response to this sad outcome.

LIFE-GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT

I prayed as we hopped on the golf cart, knowing this could end badly. I was tempted to anger and fear for our future and then the Lord of Hosts came near and reminded me every cell must bend to His command. Once more, He encouraged me to trust Him in this uncertain place, to take confidence in the Lord of Hosts who by His Word made our world out of nothing.

The Lord could intervene and heal Chuck. Based on our history, I don't think that's the greater miracle here, as much as I long for it. I believe the Lord of Hosts wants us to choose trust in Him to use His power in our lives so that His name is glorified. Will there be hard places, times of doubt, fear, wishing for what was? Yes. But I am also confident in those moments, the Lord of Hosts, who loves us with a perfect love, will use His power to accomplish His good and perfect will.

Can you see how practical theology is, how God's truth can equip us to walk these hard pathways? Thinking biblically transforms our responses to the tiniest of life's details. Each of us will face times when we need to call on the Lord of Hosts, to cry out with all our being, and trust Him to use His power to transform our cries of need into songs of joy, even if sung in a minor key.

I am a witness to this supernatural power. Though I know the days ahead will challenge my faith, I also know my good and perfect Savior will bring all His power to carry us through. And I pray that you will know this, too.