

November 1 – November 7

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

“Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth.”

Psalm 73:25

BOOK READING

Roberts, pp. 67-72

Quotation for Meditation

“There is no priority higher in a believer’s life than to delight himself in the love of Christ” (p. 69).

M’CHEYNE BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

Nov 1	2 Ki 14	2 Tim 4	Hos 7	Ps 120-122
Nov 2	2 Ki 15	Titus 1	Hos 8	Ps 123-125
Nov 3	2 Ki 16	Titus 2	Hos 9	Ps 126-128
Nov 4	2 Ki 17	Titus 3	Hos 10	Ps 129-131
Nov 5	2 Ki 18	Phm	Hos 11	Ps 132-134
Nov 6	2 Ki 19	Heb 1	Hos 12	Ps 135, 136
Nov 7	2 Ki 20	Heb 2	Hos 13	Ps 137, 138

PERSONAL REFLECTION

GROWING IN TRIAL BY TRUSTING GOD

DAVID WASHER & DAVID K. WASHER

I was in seventh grade when I picked up a book discussing trials based on James 1:2-4. It was an entirely new concept that God uses trials to grow us as Christians. But it was only two years later that God put me and my Dad in a very tight place. We knew my dad was facing a serious surgery and in the beginning, we expected an approximately three month recovery period. In God's providence my dad's surgery and consequent seizures would extend our trial for many months. Our earthly securities collapsed and God began to teach us precious truth in tight places.

Trusting in God Alone

David K.: God used Pastor Jones' testimony to exemplify for me that I COULD be happy with God alone in trial! When we fear or look to God alone, having our eyes on nothing else, that is when things are viewed rightly, and we have security. When a world of trial surrounds us we may have much else to look at. But Isaiah 8:12-14a says, "You are not to say, '*It is a conspiracy!*' in regard to all that this people call a conspiracy, and you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of *it*. It is the Lord of hosts whom you should regard as holy. And He shall be your fear, and He shall be your dread. Then He shall become a sanctuary."

When my happy, secure life disappeared, when my dad I relied on was confined to a bed, hardly able to comprehend the circumstances around him, when what was left of our normal life became unpredictable and often turned upside down and filled with many traumatic events, God was teaching me to let Him be my support and joy. By God's grace I was learning to look to Him alone. Every event was authored by Him, every pain was His tool, every day was a day for Him to work in me, and I was learning to throw myself on Him for refuge. God was humbling me and teaching me to direct my thoughts and develop the habit to look only to God as each trouble arose. I would wish that in calm and peace this was my constant view but it took tight places to teach me.

Mr. Washer: God began preparing me for tight places a couple years prior to my surgery. God also used Pastor Jones' testimony in my life to

stir a deep hunger in my heart for the knowledge of God. As I grew to know Him more, He worked in me a fear of Him and a desire to be submitted to what He had for me. Step by step I was learning to grow in trusting Him and acceptance of His plans for my life. After the surgery, I found myself in a place of complete dependence on God, literally reduced to a body in a bed, unable to control anything around me. I couldn't read Scripture or comprehend well what was read, but yet during that time our Good Shepherd held me close and supplied for me what I could not do for myself. As time went by and three months grew into a year, and a year into two and still there was not the return of my health, knowing that God was in control of all things kept me from bitterness even during times of severe headache, seizures, and emotional upheaval from medications or the injury itself, the knowledge that I did not choose this but that God chose it for me kept me at peace. He worked in me the confidence that He would provide for what He had allowed.

Trusting in God's Purposes

David K.: We have studied in Psalm 91 how God alone not only knows all, but He is in control; and not only is He in control, but He plans and performs all (Lam. 3:37-38; Amos 3:6). It is in this that we take refuge, but why does God give us tight places?

Hebrews 12:5-7, 10-11 says "and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him; for those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives." It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons...He *disciplines us for our good*, so that we may share His holiness (this is the huge reason He is working towards!!). All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness."

God disciplines us for our good! We are in the special relationship of a son, and discipline is part of this relationship. God is working in us to share His holiness, and we show trust in God when we patiently accept His working.

For me this meant to humbly yield to every pain, every tear, every burden, knowing that it was working for my good-sharing God's holiness. It meant purposefully seeking to live a certain way (kindness, patience, submission, etc.). Sometimes it just meant groaning before the Lord, my only comfort being the fact that He was working in me as His son. Either way, our trials should lead us to accept the discipline of God and grow!

Mr. Washer: While there were times I couldn't always remember a lot of different scripture, I could always remember Psalm 23 and Psalm 1. And God repeatedly brought to mind that the Lord is *MY* Shepherd. Even though I felt I was walking through the valley of the shadow of death, I knew God was with me. He supernaturally and continually ministered that truth to me. I could accept what God had for me because I trusted in Him as my Shepherd and I could rest in His purpose.

Spurgeon said, "I learned to kiss the waves that threw me on the Rock of Ages!" As we reflect on God's faithfulness to us we can say that has been our experience in the tight places God has given us, and by God's grace may it also be your experience. Trust Him!