

Member News

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Other Amazing Names Used with Jehovah

Last week: Genesis 22:14 (Jehovah-Jireh, God the Provider)

Today: Psalms 23:1 (Jehovah-Rohi, The Lord my shepherd)
“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want”.

September Birthdays

3 Wendy Cortes	15 Marcos Perales	30 Kurt Hoffman
4 Nicole Stopper	16 Jim Burruss	30 Dortha Gentry
11 Marie Burruss	24 Mason Perales	

September Anniversaries

13 Luis & Wendy Cortes

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Preacher
Carlos Peña

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When Life Doesn't Make Sense

By Allen Webster

The Bible warns us that “evil” days will come (Ecclesiastes 12:1; Matthew 6:34; Ephesians 5:16). Job observed, “*Man born of woman is of few days and full of trouble*” (Job 14:1; cf. Psalm 73:14, 21). At times, there will be events, situations, diagnoses, tragedies, and conditions in our lives that will not make sense. The Psalmist wondered aloud, “*Why standest Thou afar off, O LORD? why hidest Thou Thyself in times of trouble?*” (Psalm 10:1).

There are mysteries in the New Testament that are not explained:

- James, the brother of John was martyred for Christ, but on the same occasion Peter was delivered from prison and spared from the same ruler (Acts 12:1ff). Why? Surely the Jerusalem Christians puzzled over this matter.
- Four companions in the gospel—Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke—arrived in the city of Philippi to do mission work. Two of them—Paul and Silas—are whipped and thrown into prison. The other two were untouched. Why?
- Epaphroditus, Paul’s helper in Rome, became desperately ill but recovered (Philippians 2:25-27). Paul, however, was afflicted with a grievous “thorn in the flesh” that was chronic (2 Corinthians 12:7-9). Why?

At such times, our faith will be tested. And, in such storms, there are foundation stones that cannot be moved.

We can trust God in the dark.

Corrie Ten Boom, popular author and Holocaust survivor, wrote, “When a train goes through a tunnel and it gets dark, you don’t throw away the ticket and jump off. You sit still and trust the engineer.” So it is in life. We can trust God farther than we can “see.” Solomon wrote, “*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding; in all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will make thy paths straight*” (Proverbs 3:5-6).

When we hurt, we really have only two choices: We can hurt with God, or we can hurt without Him. We need God more in suffering than ever before. Losing faith will not remove our pain. It rather adds a second problem, and of the two, Wayne Jackson notes, “infidelity is of far greater consequence.” Job trusted in spite of unheard of suffering. When all of his children died, his possessions were lost, and his means of livelihood removed, he said simply, “*The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD*” (Job 1:21). When he soon also lost his health and suffered months of agony, he remained unfazed: “*Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him*” (Job 13:15).

Wayne Jackson advised that a period of suffering is a time to “immerse ourselves in the evidences that builds faith in the integrity of the Word of God” (Psalm 19; Romans 10:17). It is absolutely paramount that we establish confidence in the testimony of the Scriptures. Unless we are convinced that the Bible is true, and we can trust its message, there is nowhere to go for any meaningful resolution; we will fall into the devil’s trap of doubt.

Faith Must Be Tested to Be Genuine.

Do you remember those public service announcements that began, “This is a test”? When going through trials, we can say to ourselves, “This is a test.” Times of crisis prove our friendship with God and declare the authenticity of our faith. Do we love God because He provides gifts? Do we love those gifts more than we love the Giver? This was the accusation Satan made against Job (Job 1:8-12; cf. 1 Peter 1:6-9). All the things we cling to in this world will eventually disappear. The One who gives them is all that will ultimately remain.

Simple answers sometimes are enough.

R. C. Sproul offers an interesting insight in his book, *Not a Chance*. He notes that when a child asks a complicated question, or one that he is not yet ready to understand, a parent’s simple reply is, “Because.” “Because” implies that there is an answer but does not give all of it. As God’s children, sometimes it must suffice to accept “because” when we ask “why?” In Job’s trial, as well as in ours, part of the test is not knowing the reason for the suffering. Jesus neither gave long explanations of evil nor ignored it (Luke 4:18-19).

Vance Havner remarked, “God marks across some of our days, ‘Will explain later.’” He continued, “One day of green pastures and still waters is followed by dark valleys and miry swamps, and a thousand ‘whys’ lie unanswered, tabled for future reference.” Warren Wiersbe wrote, “God’s people live by promises, not by explanations.” What promises do we have when life does not make sense?

We have the assurance of God’s presence.

While God never promised life would be problem-free, He did promise to be with His people (Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5; Psalm 46:5-7). God was with David in the valley of the shadow of death (Psalm 23). He was with the three Hebrew men in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3) and with Daniel in the lion’s den (Daniel 6). God sent an angel to the garden to strengthen Jesus (Luke 22:43). God is not a disinterested spectator in our lives. He is neither distant nor disengaged. He does care (1 Peter 5:7). Even when we are afraid, through faith we can sing, “What a fellowship, what a joy divine, safe and secure from all alarms.”

We have the assurance of God’s peace (John 14:27; 16:33; 20:19-21; Ephesians 2:12-14; 1 Peter 5:14).

We have the assurance of God’s providence (Romans 8:28). Rather than asking “Where is God?” or “Why me?” let us ask, “What can I learn from this?” and “Who can I help because of this?” (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). College classes are not easy, but they prepare us to be of service after graduation. Life’s problems are not easy, but they qualify us to serve in ways we never could otherwise.