

Haiti Happenings

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*“The Lord is my portion,
says my soul, ‘Therefore
I will hope in Him.’”*

Lamentations 3:25-26

Please continue to pray:

1. Protection over our people as they serve in Haiti during a time of great instability.
2. For peace and hope as Wilckly and Dee wait for the door to open for them to return to Haiti.
3. For wisdom, clarity, health, energy, and peace for them and all under their leadership.
4. For the means to continue providing for all those under their care in Haiti.
5. For peace for Haiti and its people.

Dear Family,

School in Macomb is two months underway, and I am grateful to have been placed back in a classroom where I work (still part-time) in person with the students. Many of the kids in our room struggle with changes in routine or when things don't go as planned, and yesterday one little boy for whom these interruptions are very frustrating grew very upset when he had to wait in line so long for the bathroom that he didn't think he would get time to read his books, part of our usual morning routine. I told him that I was sorry he had to wait and that waiting is hard, even for big people, but we can try to make the most of it by doing other things while we wait, so I suggested that he practice his ABCs or look around the room and find different colors or numbers. He calmed down a little, but only for a moment. Then, when the teacher noticed his frustrations escalating, she decided to tell all of the students that she was changing our routine that morning and allowing everyone to spend a little more time with their books because waiting for the bathroom was taking longer than usual. Once he realized his routine would remain the same he calmed down immediately and the waiting became much more tolerable.

This whole scene really stuck with me because of late I have been reflecting a lot on waiting and the nature of it and how I respond to it...how we all tend to respond to it. A quick Google search informed me, from a survey that came to some rather dismal conclusions, that the average person will spend 10 years of their life waiting in line. TEN YEARS. That's a lot of waiting. Waiting in line is hard for anyone to do, child or adult, because it can feel like your time is being wasted...all that time just sitting or standing around gives our minds time to wander and soon if we aren't purposeful with that down time we can begin thinking that our time is more valuable than that of those around us and our problem is more important and why aren't those people at the counter hurrying up and getting to ME and MY needs??

Waiting in line is one thing...but when we are waiting on God for something, especially something we have been desiring or asking of Him for a very long time, the wait can feel unbearable. We *know* He makes all things beautiful in its time (Eccl. 3:11)...we *know* that when we delight in Him He will give us the desires of our hearts (Ps. 37:4)...we *know* our ways are not His ways (Is. 55:8)...we *know* He is working all things together for good for those who love Him (Rom. 8:28) and we even *know* that when we wait on Him He will renew our strength (Is. 40:31)...but in the moment, in that season, when

everything seems to be going wrong, falling apart, when the waiting and the unknown and the seemingly unfulfilled dreams are becoming oppressive and overwhelming...it can be easy to forget what we know and stop believing it and soon find that our hope has begun to fade...

I have struggled with that several times over the years...some days it seemed as though I would be crushed under the weight of what I wanted so badly but wasn't yet seeing come to fruition...those were the days on which I had drawn inward and was focusing on myself and the *thing* I was most desiring...I was fixated on IT and couldn't see anything or anyone else...but over time I learned, through God's constant, gentle-but-firm reminders, that when I instead fixed my gaze on HIM, the GIVER, and not the gift I was asking of Him...eventually...sometimes slowly, sometimes suddenly...the burden lifted, my perspective shifted, and I remembered what I knew...I remembered what I believed...that God is Who He says He is and that He can do what He says He can do...and when I would take the time to be purposeful in my remembering...to write down what I remembered that I knew...to write down all those things He had done for me in the past...all those things He had given me and ways He had answered me before...I was able to see how where I was then was also a gift...how the things I had in that season were also blessings and helping me to grow in my walk with Him and learn how to love as He loves. I wouldn't say that this perspective always made the waiting easier...but it certainly helped my attitude about it.

When it comes to Haiti, and all of the escalating turmoil that country is facing these days and has been enduring these past few years...it can be very difficult to hold on to hope and to keep that perspective. Ministry has looked so different and has become very difficult for the Dorcés and for anyone still serving in Haiti. I have been unable to lead any teams there or even go on my own more than once in the past three years...the situation continues to deteriorate and so many people there are suffering. We who love Haiti and its people have been crying out with the Psalmist "How long, O Lord?" (Ps. 13:1)

But when we use this waiting time to remember...to remember all the things He has done for us and all the ways He has changed hearts and lives and turned things around and answered prayers and provided in perfect timing and performed miracles and HASN'T FORGOTTEN HAITI or those who are suffering...when we believe that our God STILL is Who He says He is and that He STILL can do what He says He can do...He helps us to rest in Him. To be still while we wait...to remember.

Last week I was preparing my slideshow before I spoke at one of our supporting churches, and as I was going through all of my Haiti pictures to choose the ones I'd use I was reminded of so many of those ways God has worked. I would love to share some of those with you...my next letter will include some of those stories in lieu of this example of "remembering while we wait", as well as a continuation of this reflection on "waiting well".

I pray you are able to find hope in remembering while you wait as well, whatever it is you may be waiting for.

With Love in Christ, Shaina Ascone



For fun: I did it!! I rode my bike across the entire state of Iowa! I completed RAGBRAI on July 31st...over 470 miles in seven days of biking. It was quite the experience and I am proud of myself for accomplishing it...needless to say I have only been on my bike three times since, lol.

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