

Haiti Happenings

“And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you... He humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.”

Deuteronomy 8:2a,3

Shaina Thiner
July 2022

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 move forward in expanding the ministry across the island.**
- 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 and the DR.**
- 5. For peace for Haiti and its people.**

Dear Family,

A few months ago I heard a sermon series on what is known as Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount". In the portion on worry the above Old Testament passage was referenced, and its deep significance pierced my heart. God *allowed* the Hebrew people to hunger...not to cause them suffering, but to expand their knowledge of Him, deepen their reliance on Him, and ultimately strengthen their relationship with Him...because He *knew* that *this* is what would ultimately bring them peace and joy and fulfillment.

There have been many times in my life I have hungered and thirsted, often intensely, for something I just "*knew*" was good for me, would help me; or even better, was good and helpful for someone I loved. In the midst of this hungering and thirsting I would often doubt and question God and His timing and even at times His sovereignty. How could He allow this prayer, this longing, to go unanswered, seeing the suffering of His dear ones? And always, *always*, when these times had passed and I was able to look back...*always*, I saw His hand in all of it. *Always*, I saw how what He had for us, *through* it and *from* it, was better. *Always still* I can see this. If only my fickle, forgetful, flighty human heart would remember this when I come to times of longing again.

My dear ones in Haiti (and the Dorcés who are not in Haiti but deeply longing to return) are going through a time like this right now. Haiti as a nation is a mess. I am not going to sugar-coat it. There are kidnappings and killings daily. Everyone is afraid to step outside their door, let alone travel to another city or go anywhere on the roads. Food and supplies are priced so high everyone is affected and many who were already struggling to survive are now desperate. Our people there on the field are still telling Kiki and Dee not to come back yet. They have never before been in this situation...Wilckly in his entire life, Dee in the 30 years since she has been in Haiti.

It is very difficult to look at their sufferings (especially from my padded chair in my air-conditioned house in my safe little town) and not ask "Why?" And I don't think God is bothered by my why's...I am so grateful to have a God big enough He can handle being questioned...and a God intimate enough He is moved by our pleas. But when, with His help, I can get my head out of the why's and into the because's...when I can remember what came out of the previous times of hungering in my life and in the lives of those I love, I know I can believe something better is coming.

With Love in Christ,
Shaina Thiner

More lessons on waiting...



Talitha*

She was too tiny to be so fearful. How could such a young child have learned such fear of people? I had never experienced this before...she tugged on my heart. And when I learned her story it nearly broke my heart. I have delayed to tell her story, though it is probably the one that most moved and changed me, because my part in her story doesn't have a happy ending and it is still painful for me to recount. But her story isn't over, and I am choosing to believe that what is coming is so much better.

Talitha's* mom was raised by Wilckly and Dee in the Children's Home, but she was one who left them before she was grown because of relatives' deception and interference and thus she ended up on her own and on the streets at an early age. When a friend of hers brought a tiny little girl to Wilckly and Dee and told them whose daughter she was they, though saddened, could not refuse to take her in. Their first grandchild. Her mom had been unable or unwilling to take care of her since birth and she had been passed around from friend to friend. It was evident from her physical condition that none of these "friends" were in good places to care for her, either. Talitha* was covered in sores from head to toe. By the time I met her she had been living with Wilckly and Dee for a few months and though they were treating her the sores were still everywhere and very painful. She didn't like being touched or held, screamed every time her hair was combed or braided, and hated the ocean (the salt water was agonizing). Besides her physical condition, Talitha* had severe attachment disorder due to having had so many "care"-givers in her young life. She trusted no one and refused to let anyone close to her, physically or emotionally. She rarely smiled and almost never laughed. She was four years old when I met her.

I spent the next six years of my time in Haiti making every effort to show Talitha* that I loved her. That there were people in her life she could trust. Wilckly and Dee and their kids (especially Kelsey...of anyone in her life Talitha* may have trusted it was Kelsey...they were best friends from day one), and so many others there (many of whom had also helped to raise Talitha's* mom) strove to show her the same. Slowly, gradually, Talitha* began to open up, to allow people in. As her body healed, her heart began to follow. Though every time I left Haiti and returned it was like starting over again in our relationship every time I *did* come back she seemed to trust me a little more.

She began smiling and laughing more, actually playing with the other children, having fun, being a child herself. She was also like a little mom...she was the oldest of the children who lived with us, so she bossed them around and cared for them like they were her own. She made sure they ate, helped them get dressed, and was usually the head of crew when they were getting into trouble. Talitha* began going to school, and though she struggled academically (she would much rather have been playing or even helping around the compound than reading and writing) she worked hard to improve her grades. Even in school she was usually taking care of the younger ones around her. Talitha* loved church, and though she didn't like being in front of crowds, she always agreed to sing a special when Kelsey was standing up there with her. Usually she was late to church and school because she was so busy helping everyone else get ready for the day.



But one day due to circumstances we had no control over, and a situation involving a lot of distrust and misunderstanding, Talitha* was taken from us. It was heart-breaking...the circumstances were devastating of course, and the fact that we could do nothing about it, but what was most disheartening was that Talitha* had finally reached a point in her relationship with a few of us where she knew we loved her, that we wouldn't leave her...and I believe she truly returned that love and trust. To have her wrenched away with almost no warning and very little hope of ever seeing her again before she was grown was almost more than we could bear.

Talitha* did eventually come back periodically for visits; she told us that though those she was now living with didn't want her to come, she knew who was her real family and wanted Papi Kiki and Mami Kiki to know she hadn't forgotten them.

One day when she came for a visit she brought a tiny baby girl with her...her daughter. Unfortunately due to life circumstances beyond our control and decisions she had made Talitha* was following in the footsteps of her mother, but this tiny precious baby girl and her young mom found refuge and help and love in Pastor Kiki and Mdme. Kiki's home...their first great-grandchild.

Talitha's* story isn't over. Praise God, just as He hasn't forgotten the nation of Haiti and this season of hungering so He hasn't forgotten Talitha* and her plight and our longings for her and our desire for her to find ultimate love and fulfillment and belonging in Jesus. For as deep as our longings are for her His longings are deeper.

Though it has been painful for me to recount much of this story and due to circumstances I changed names and left out many details I want all of you to know it so you can join me in praying and in choosing to believe He has something better coming, as He always, *always* has before.

*name changed to protect identity



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