

## Reflections on July 2013 Readings

A timely message for our country today is found in 2 Chronicles 7:4: *...if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and forgive their sin and heal their land.* I feel a worldwide revival building up. There appears to be a polarizing, either toward or away from the Lord. The Bible is now accessible to almost everyone, thanks to the Internet, and people are flocking to the Word and to the Lord as never before. Wouldn't it be great to have an unprecedented turning to the Lord in repentance and worship? It's no doubt just what our country (and every country) needs.

Some wonderful quotes we read in July from Proverbs 17 are:

*He who repeats a matter alienates a friend.* [Help me have more discretion in keeping things confidential, Lord.]

*A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a downcast spirit dries up the bones.* [Let me be filled with your joy, Lord, and exude a loving, cheerful countenance, which will attract others to you--and improve my health in the process!]

*Even a fool is deemed intelligent when he closes his lips.* [My mouth is one of my biggest enemies. Grant me wisdom and discretion, Lord, so I can think/pray more and speak less. And when I speak may my words be edifying.] I'm learning Proverbs 3 by heart. Here is a small part of it: *Keep sound wisdom and discretion, so they will be life to your soul and grace to your neck.* Please don't let me hang myself with my own ill-advised words!

I found it interesting that in Chronicles 1 chapter 7, in the lineage of the tribe of Ephraim, a woman is mentioned: *very unusual.* Sheerah, a daughter of Ephraim (son of Joseph), is credited with building three towns. She must have been quite a woman! I also noticed that when the tribe of Asher was delineated, it mentioned that, though scant in number... *all were responsible, excellent in character, and brave in battle.* May we not discount people whom society may tell us are weak or unacceptable in any way, for God can do great works through them.

In the first chapter of II Corinthians Paul described how he and his colleagues were troubled, frustrated, persecuted and struck down... but never crushed, in despair, abandoned, or destroyed. In 8:16 he says: *The outer man is wearing out but the inner man is being renewed day by day.* [Let us take heart and be renewed daily by connecting to the Source of all that is good. Thank you, Lord, for being all-knowing, all-present and all-powerful.] I am learning Romans 8:3-39 by heart. It starts like this: *If God is for us, who is against us?* and ends with: *In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loves us. I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

More Proverbs from our July readings...

*If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame.* [Make me a better listener, Lord, and help me keep my mouth shut!]

*There are friends who pretend to be friends, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. (18:24)*  
Guess who that is!!

Here are some thoughts from Proverbs 18 to ponder... What do they mean to you and what personal examples come to mind?

*Haughtiness leads to destruction, humility to honor. (18:12)*

*A man's gift makes room for him, and brings him before great men. (18:16)*