

The 15min Reflection for the week of December 26, 2020

Isaiah 63:7-9 NLT I will tell of the LORD's unfailing love. I will praise the LORD for all He has done. I will rejoice in His great goodness to Israel, which He has granted according to His mercy and love. 8 He said, "They are My very own people. Surely they will not betray Me again." And He became their Savior. 9 In all their suffering He also suffered, and He personally rescued them. In His love and mercy He redeemed them. He lifted them up and carried them through all the years.

Matthew 2:13-23 NLT After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and His mother," the angel said. "Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill Him." 14 That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, His mother, 15 and they stayed there until Herod's death. This fulfilled what the Lord had spoken through the prophet: "I called My Son out of Egypt." 16 Herod was furious when he realized that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, based on the wise men's report of the star's first appearance. 17 Herod's brutal action fulfilled what God had spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: 18 "A cry was heard in Ramah—weeping and great mourning. Rachel weeps for her children, refusing to be comforted, for they are dead." 19 When Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. 20 "Get up!" the angel said. "Take the child and His mother back to the land of Israel, because those who were trying to kill the child are dead." 21 So Joseph got up and returned to the land of Israel with Jesus and His mother. 22 But when he learned that the new ruler of Judea was Herod's son Archelaus, he was afraid to go there. Then, after being warned in a dream, he left for the region of Galilee. 23 So the family went and lived in a town called Nazareth. This fulfilled what the prophets had said: "He will be called a Nazarene."

Glory! Definitions of the word "glory" include a time of rejoicing, fame, splendor, or a feeling of dignity. Have you ever felt a sense of glory or honor? When?

Sometimes, when we are at our lowest, someone comes our way to lift us out of our doldrums. Do you ever stop to think that even the little things you say or do for other people may give them a moment of glory, or restore their dignity, or give them a boost at a critical time? What makes us respond to others in this encouraging way?

God restores his people over and over again when they disobey and wander off. There are often messengers, leading them or pointing them back to God. Is it possible that those we encounter at crucial times, those who lift us up, have been sent by God? In the same manner, aren't we prompted by God in some way to respond to those around us?

And what is the cause, or basis, of our responsiveness to others? Some of us may dare to admit that the intentions behind our "kind" actions are simply to look good, to foster our image, to reap some "brownie points."

I believe God calls us to minister to each other, strangers or not. As Christians, we not only receive compassion and kindness from others, but also feel compelled to share compassion and kindness daily. It is because our Father in heaven created us, and bids us to follow his example. None of us is above another in God's eyes, although at times we certainly act and speak like we are. But by serving God and one another, our bond becomes tighter, and we are less able to be torn apart by life's low points.

God sends us out a purpose; we all have a calling to fulfill. It boils down to simply praying, listening, praising and serving. *Lord, lead us to be good Samaritans in our daily walk through life. Amen.*