

“But you, O Lord, endure forever, and your Name from age to age” (v.12). Because of the Lord’s endurance and constant love, believers know that death and the grave do not have the final say. Because of the Lord’s love poured out on the cross, believers know they will be raised up on the last day.

Jeremiah 31:27-34; Ephesians 5:1-20; Matthew 9:9-17

### **Saturday, May 23**

Psalm 107:33-43 *Whoever is wise will ponder these things, and consider well the mercies of the LORD.* (v.43)

A fast-food restaurant jingle tells us “You deserve a break today!” We tell our bosses that we have earned a promotion or that we are due a raise. Perhaps advancement, leisure, or financial success have become our rights as those living the American dream.

What have we earned or what do we deserve from God? Deserts turned into pools of water? Dry lands into water springs? A fruitful harvest? The psalmist reminds us that the Lord blessed Israel because of His mercy, not because of their worthiness.

Mercy implies setting aside the demands of justice. Israel’s record of faithfulness to their covenant with the Lord was spotty at best. God’s chosen people “were fools and took to rebellious ways” (v.17).

Despite Israel’s “adultery,” Yahweh had mercy. Despite the just demand for punishment, Yahweh “sent forth his word and healed them and saved them from the grave” (v.20). And despite the just demand for our punishment because of our sinfulness, the Lord sent His Son to heal us and save us from the grave. “Whoever is wise will ponder these things, and consider well the mercies of the Lord” (v.43).

Ezekiel 36:22-27; Psalm 108; Ephesians 6:10-24; Matthew 9:18-26

*by Anthony P. Clark*

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## ***Good News Daily***

**Volume XXVI**

**May 17-23, 2026**

**Number 20**

### **Sunday, May 17**

Psalm 66 *Come and hear, all you who fear God; let me tell you what he has done for me.* (v.16 NIV)

A once popular song from years ago asked, “What have you done for me lately?” Our present day memories are often very short, and yesterday’s success or failure shapes today’s opinion poll. Yesterday’s goodwill tour can erase last year’s scandal, and tonight’s miscue can cancel last month’s success. What have you done for me lately?

The psalmist’s corporate memory, however, reaches beyond just the recent past and includes the full scope of God’s “awesome deeds” and “how wonderful he is in his doing toward all people.” Even though the people of God were “tried just as silver is tried,” the psalmist recalls that the “place of refreshment” dominated the people’s memory.

Can we recall the mighty and awesome works of God? Can we remember the hand of God in His dealing with Israel? Can we recollect the drama of Jesus’ life, ministry, death, and resurrection? With the “big picture” as a backdrop, can we tell others what God has done for us?

What has the Lord done for you lately? And whom have you told?

Exodus 3:1-12; Psalm 67; Hebrews 12:18-29; Luke 10:17-24

### **Monday, May 18**

Psalm 89:1-18 *I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you have established your faithfulness in heaven itself.* (v.2)

Is the human understanding of love defined from a subjective or objective perspective? A subjective perspective suggests that feelings, emotions, and experience influence our understanding of love. Our hearts go pitter patter, our palms are clammy, and we can’t wait until the next phone call or date. To paraphrase a Motown classic, “Could it be we’re falling in love?”

Love based on feelings, emotions, and experience is often short-lived. Feelings change, emotions bounce from joy to sadness, and experiences vary from the good to the bad. As feelings, emotions, and experiences change (and they will) we fall in and out of love.

The psalmist contrasts our subjective understanding of love to an objective understanding of love: God’s love. Unlike our often-variable feelings of love, God’s love is permanent, reliable, and trustworthy.

This is good news for those of us who face the often-shifting sands of human love at home, work, or with friends. Unlike the sandbar that shifts with the tide, God’s love is strong and fixed like the granite rocks of the breakwater.

Joshua 1:1-9; Ephesians 3:1-13; Matthew 8:5-17

## **Tuesday, May 19**

Psalm 97 *The LORD is king! Let the earth rejoice! Let the farthest coastlands be glad.* (v.1 NLT)

Elvis Presley still remains a strong icon in our popular culture years after his death. Commemorative plates, musical collections, and clever commercials continue to keep the myth of the “King” alive in American life. But like other earthly kingdoms, some real and some mythical, we simply choose to forget the “darkside” of the aging Elvis. In the end, our earthly kingdoms are shattered, broken, or simply crumble away. Our “kings” frustrate and disappoint us.

Even Israel’s experience with her kings proved a disappointment. With a few notable exceptions (i.e. David and Josiah), her kings rejected the Lord and His commandments. Israel’s political leadership was the frequent target of the Lord’s anger and discipline. Israel’s kings often frustrated and disappointed the Lord and His people.

Perhaps the psalmist had experienced that disappointment as he proclaims the Lord as King. The psalmist reminds Israel—and us—that the only trustworthy, consistent and dependable ruler was, is, and will be the Lord.

1 Samuel 16:1-13a; Psalms 99, 100; Ephesians 3:14-21; Matthew 8:18-27

## **Wednesday, May 20**

Psalm 101 *I will set no worthless thing before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not fasten its grip on me.* (v.3 NAS)

My parents can recall home life as children without television. Like my children, I cannot ever recall home life as a child without television. The difference between my childhood with television and my children’s recollections will be one small piece of hardware: the remote control. Will my children ever believe you had to stand up and walk across the floor to change the channel?

Just as television technology has changed from black and white to color and from tower antennae to satellite, so has the programming. In some cases, for the better; in other cases, for the worse. The classic programs from not so long ago are like boring baked potatoes compared to the spicy and steamy fare of today. Channel surfing can reveal explicit language, sexually suggestive situations, and even graphic sexual activity. Will my children ever believe that Ginger on Gilligan’s Island was as spicy and steamy as it ever was?

The psalmist understood how images are played and replayed in the “theater of our mind.” These images may draw us to or lure us from the Lord. One family I know has Psalm 101:3 framed above their television set. Mom and dad decide if a program seeks to honor the Lord and biblical values. How

might your television or movie viewing change if you posted Psalm 101:3 over the television?

Isaiah 4:2-6; Psalm 109; Ephesians 4:1-16; Matthew 8:28-34

## **Thursday, May 21**

Psalm 105:1-22 *Until the time that his word came to pass, the word of the LORD tested him.* (v.19)

A yearly requirement for Army National Guard and Reserve soldiers is to pass the Army Physical Fitness test: two minutes each of push-ups and sit-ups and a two-mile run. It is twenty minutes of physical exertion, and I can’t say that I enjoy it. But do any of us enjoy taking physical, academic, or spiritual tests?

Joseph certainly did not enjoy slavery and imprisonment, but he endured these tests and tried to maintain the Lord’s perspective. From the Lord’s perspective, Joseph’s testing, his rise to leadership and Israel’s journey to Egypt because of famine all worked to fulfill the Lord’s intention for His people. As Joseph told his brothers years after they sold him into slavery, “Do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life...it was not you who sent me here, but God” (Genesis 45:5-8). “And as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive” (Genesis 50:20).

The psalmist reminds us that the tests and trials of life help accomplish the Lord’s intentions, develop our character (Romans 5:3,4), and provide godly discipline to His children (Hebrews 12:6, 10, 11). The difficult circumstances of life can work for good in the lives of the godly; it depends on our perspective.

Zechariah 4:1-14; Ephesians 4:17-32; Matthew 9:1-8

## **Friday, May 22**

Psalm 102 *My days are like a lengthened shadow, and I wither away like grass.* (v.11)

“Dust in the wind, all we are is dust in the wind.” I listened to those words on the radio as I drove to my college reunion. 1983...It was a good year. It seems so long ago and the years seem to pass more quickly as I grow older.

The psalmist understood the fleeting nature of time and our lives. Shadows and withering grass seem like appropriate images to describe that which we often deny: our mortality.

For many, that’s how it all ends. Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die. For many, when the shadows disappear and the grass dies, that is how it all ends. Death and the grave have the final say and the cycle continues with futility.