

Unanswered Questions

by Pauline Farrow

“I cry aloud to the LORD, and he answers me from his holy hill. I lie down and sleep; I wake again, for the LORD sustains me.” Psalm 3:4-5

As I prepared for my third go-around with my hip replacement surgery, my first reaction was a sarcastic response, “How come I am so lucky?” The timing was inconvenient, and I knew all about the pain and long recovery that would be coming again. The question to God of “Why me?” came up several times. Well, thankfully I am now past that third surgery and on the road to recovery. In reflection, I can say again, “Thank-you God for the experience, because it has brought me closer to You in so many ways.” With each surgery and other trials of illness and death, God has showed me some of His ways.

One of the best things coming from my experiences is that I read and studied more about God’s Word, looking for answers and some comfort. One of my favorite readings comes from the verse printed above. King David, who experienced many trials during his life, wrote this Psalm. When I am going through difficult times, especially physical or emotional pain, I find it very difficult to sleep peacefully. Those long sleepless nights go on and on, with life seeming to be at its darkest. I have had some of those dark, sleepless nights. This reading reminds me that God personally hears me and answers me. He refreshes me with sleep that sustains me for yet another day. I can have the confidence and assurance that God is with me, even when life is at its darkest. I am never alone.

With each new surgery, I was overcome by the awesome support given to my family and me. It was very comforting to know that people were praying for me. I discovered that prayer is one of God’s strongest ways to show His support. With the power of prayer, people showed me all kinds of loving service: telephone calls, visits, get-well cards, meals, transportation for my children when they were younger, good care from doctors and nurses, etc. It is very humbling to receive this kind of support, knowing that it ultimately is coming from God and is a showing of His love. From my own experiences with difficulties, I have more empathy for others in pain. I thank God for showing me how to reciprocate His love to someone else in need.

One of my favorite hymns is “On Eagle’s Wings.” Recently, during worship we had the reading from Isaiah 40:31 which has such special meaning for me, **“those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.”** I thank God for the power of hope. I do not know if I will ever be able to run very well again. My children laugh sometimes at the way I walk now; and when I say I’ll just run into the store for a few items, they remind me that I don’t run, I only walk. But, because I have the renewed hope of being lifted up high on the wings of eagles, I know each new difficult experience gets me closer to God. I have the hope

of strength returning and the ability to walk again. I have the hope that my God is always with me on this journey I call life. I have the hope that I can finish strong, and not grow weary or faint.

Loving God, I thank You and praise You for the hope and promise You bring to my life. Thank You for all the people who have cared for me over the years – especially in those difficult times. Thanks for the ways You have taught me about Your love and care – even when those lessons have come through trials and hardships. Help me to care for others so they too may more fully know Your love. In Jesus' name, AMEN.