

HIS DAYS,  
My *Praise*  
DAILY DEVOTIONS FOR WOMEN

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# HIS DAYS, My Praise

DAILY DEVOTIONS FOR WOMEN

## Introduction

The need for a project such as this was first conceived in the search for Christ-centered devotional writings for women by women. With this in mind, we developed *His Days, My Praise*. We chose a one-year chronological Bible reading plan by Tyndale House as our guide, but we did not follow it exactly.

## Goals

The goals for this project are many and varied. We hope to:

- Provide a theologically sound, yearly devotional for women.
- Encourage women to read the Bible.
- Develop a deeper connection of praise toward our God for both writer and reader.
- Bring the cross to a central focus in the heart of the reader.
- Display a fresh approach toward devotional writing.
- Share the writing gifts of Christian women.
- Encourage Christian women in application of God's Word to their lives through the modeling and activity of reflective journaling.

## Audience

The intended audience is women seasoned or seeking in their Christian faith.

## Format of the book

In order that the reader might begin the readings at any time, the readings are not dated but rather numbered. Writings are grouped by writer. In view of the relational style of women, each writer is identified with a biography and photo.

## Format of each page

**Rejoice:** A verse of praise begins each page. Each writer received a set of verses of praise that could be repeated with each section of readings. Additional verses were sometimes added. This verse begins each devotion to help the writer and reader remember who God is and, therefore, begin with greater trust and confidence in the One with whom they are communicating.

**Read:** The Scripture text is provided in order that the reader may complete reading the entire Bible in one year.

**Reflect:** Each writer chose a text as the basis for her reflection for each day.

**“Jane’s Praise:”** This section is the writer’s response to the reading. She has made an effort to “Think, Teach, Thank.” The writing is a journaling style, as a letter to the Lord, in the first person. Each page is written with the assumption that the reader has done the Scripture readings. The writers focused on one aspect they found in the daily readings and applied it to their lives.

**My Praise:** Readers are encouraged to use this section for personal reflection and a journaling of that reflection.

# The Authors

The women who wrote these devotions are deeply committed Christians. Their diverse backgrounds provide a rich variety to their insights. A look at their biographies reveals women who are married—some with children and grandchildren—single, school teachers, a human resources professional, an author, women's Bible study leaders, a marketing coordinator, musicians, and a PhD. What they all have in common is their love for the Bible and its message of God's love in Jesus Christ.

## Nancy Ninman



I was born into a loving Christian home. I was baptized as an infant and able to attend Christian schools for kindergarten through high school. God called me to be a nurse, where I am given many opportunities to address patients' physical and spiritual needs. My husband and I are blessed with two children, now adults. I enjoy bicycling, traveling, and photography. I am a Bible study leader and women's retreat planner. Singing and playing music to glorify God comes from my heart.

This Scripture verse helps me reflect on my life of praise now and through eternity: "*Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!*" (Revelation 5:12).

— *Days 1–31* —

## Lori Dorn

Thanks and praise to God for his gift of faith through Baptism upon my birth. Knowing Jesus my Savior has been a great joy and blessing throughout my life.

God has richly blessed me with an amazing husband, a wonderful family, great friends, and a successful career as a business manager and human resources professional. Traveling throughout the world has been a bonus!



Inspiring Scripture verses are found in Romans 8:38,39:

*"I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

— *Days 32-59* —

## Jane Schlenvogt-Dew

My mother taught me to sing "Jesus loves me, this I know." Faithful Sunday school and youth leaders shared Bible truths, and I was blessed to grow in faith. The cross of Christ calmed my heart as my husband journeyed through cancer to his heavenly home. I now serve God's people as a Christian teacher, author, women's Bible study leader, and retreat presenter. I love being able to share my home and enjoy practicing the gift of hospitality!



Jeremiah 29:11 has often brought me peace: *"I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'"* (NIV)

— *Days 60-90* —

## Carrie Groth

It was a big day to be a six-year-old. I can still recall the tiny polka dots on my white dress and the red rose my mother gave me afterward. I stood at the baptismal font, my big sister to my right and my little brother to my left. Praise be to my Father! He had made me his own.

Presently, I have the great joy of serving as a Christian teacher, a women's Bible study leader, and a pastor's wife. I enjoy reading, treasure hunting at local thrift stores, writing, and singing.

The verse of Scripture so profoundly true in my life comes from the lips of the angel Gabriel: "*With God nothing shall be impossible*" (Luke 1:37 KJV).



— *Days 91–120* —

## Mary Hochmuth

Sitting with my beloved grandfather and reading God's Word is one of my fondest early memories. Our frequent talks led me into a lifelong pursuit of God's wisdom and a desire to know the Lord and serve him in any capacity that he wills. In addition to wife and mother, the roles Jesus has given me include women's Bible study leader, retreat presenter, and Christian elementary school teacher. Not only do I delight in teaching classes in writing and literature, but I also cherish the moments I spend reading and writing for enjoyment.

A Scripture verse that has brought me peace over the years is Philippians 4:13: "*I can do all things through him who strengthens me.*"



— *Days 121–151* —



## Cheryl Retzlaff

At home in a rural community, my faithful parents obeyed God's command to train up a child in the way she should go. Consequently, I was trained and educated in God's Word while attending a parochial elementary school, high school, and college. My husband and I have been blessed with three children and five grandchildren, one of whom is singing with the angels. I praise God as he has blessed me tremendously with a teaching career spanning the last 40 years. I enjoy spending time with family and friends or reading.



*"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding"* (Proverbs 3:5). This verse has become a source of comfort for me in all aspects of my life.

— *Days 152-181* —

## Sondra Retzlaff

The Holy Spirit planted faith within my heart at my baptism and has fed and nourished it through God's Word since. I earned a bachelor of science degree, and after trying out several career paths, I am currently a marketing coordinator for an engineering firm. I praise the Lord for singleness and contentment. Outside of work, I am pleased to cook and read and write fictional stories.



When my faith is tested, I am encouraged by Hebrews 12:2: *"[Look] to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is at the right hand of the throne of God."*

— *Days 182-212* —

## Karen Hunter

I became a child of God through Baptism as an infant. I had the privilege of Christian education through elementary school, high school, and college. For the last 32 years, I have enjoyed teaching scores of students the joy of playing the piano. I've been blessed with an amazing husband, and he and I have three adult children. I enjoy exercising, reading, and writing, as well as leading Bible studies for women and playing the keyboard for worship services.



My life verse is often used as a song of praise: *"Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust, and will not be afraid"* (Isaiah 12:2).

— *Days 213–243* —

## Kristen Koepsell



I can't remember a time when I didn't know my Savior Jesus, thanks to faithful parents who brought me to be baptized soon after I was born. Since then God has only deepened my relationship with him and given me more and more reasons for praise and gratitude. I serve him as a staff minister, single person, musician, and encourager, doing my best to live and share the freedom he gives through his forgiveness and unconditional love. *"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus"* (Romans 8:1). I also enjoy spending time pursuing physical and spiritual fitness, playing and writing music, and reading voraciously.

— *Days 244–273* —

## Kris Howard

Working on this project, I thought so often of the strong women in my family who made sure I learned about Jesus as a young child and of friends who encourage me in my faith today.

After living in Nebraska, New England, Germany, Georgia, and New England again, I'm now a middle school teacher at a public school in Madison, Wisconsin. I praise God for leading me to a career that feels like a calling—and that comes with summer vacations!

One of my favorite gospel verses is John 14:27: "*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you.*" I tend to get caught up in whirlwinds, and this clear message reminds me to slow down, trust God's guidance, and praise him for his grace.



— *Days 274–304* —

## Michele Paul

I live in Colorado with my husband and two sons. I praise God that I have the wonderful privilege of teaching to many levels of students. I've also had the joy of sharing Jesus with other women. I have led Bible studies, presented a workshop at a national missionary convention, and served as a worship leader at a Christian women's retreat.

My greatest joy is teaching. Whether at the pre-school, elementary, or high school level, it is a joy to serve God in this way. Our children are our future.

My favorite Scripture verse is "*Be still, and know that I am God*" (Psalm 46:10). It reminds me that God is always in control. My favorite hymn is "*In Christ Alone*"; those words say it all.



— *Days 305–334* —

## Jerralyn Moudry

I have been blessed to have had faith since birth. My grounding in the Lord from my parents and Christian elementary and high schools sustained me through earning a PhD from a major public university. Currently, I am a professor at a Lutheran college and get to share my faith with students every day. I enjoy learning, mentoring, scrapbooking, procrastinating, and spending every free moment with my husband and two young children.



A Scripture verse that has helped me maintain perspective over the years is *"From him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever"* (Romans 11:36).

— *Days 335–365* —

# Day 1

**REJOICE:** *"My heart exults in the LORD; my horn is exalted in the LORD. My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in your salvation."* (1 Samuel 2:1)

**READ:** Genesis 1:1–3:24

**REFLECT:** *"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."* (Genesis 3:15)

## NANCY'S PRAISE:

Lord God, Creator of the world,

I have hiked the Rocky Mountains and stood on the rim of the Grand Canyon. The majesty of the mountains and the depth of the canyons have taken my breath away. They are powerful reminders of your might and power.

How beautiful the Garden of Eden must have been! Adam and Eve lived in the middle of your handiwork. Then Satan appeared and darkness fell. The perfection of your work changed in a moment. The world was no longer the perfect home; neither were Adam and Eve two perfect people. You could have turned your back and walked away, banning the first people from your presence forever. But your love for us was present in the garden. You had a plan. The promise of salvation from sin was given as quickly as we turned our back on you. *"I will put enmity . . . ; he shall bruise your head."* Your Son would rescue us from the darkness of our sin, not because we are so loveable but because you are so merciful.

I have known good and evil. I have seen the beauty of a summer sunset and the tiny fingers of a newborn baby. I know people devastated by illness or abused by the people who should love them. The world is far from the perfect garden where our first parents lived.

But you are the perfect God with the perfect plan. You provided salvation to me and the entire world through the gift of your own Son. Oh, what a mighty and loving God!

——— *My Praise* ———

## Day 2

**REJOICE:** *“Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the LORD; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”* (Isaiah 25:9)

**READ:** Genesis 4:1–5:32; 1 Chronicles 1:1-4; Genesis 6:1-22

**REFLECT:** *The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. . . . So the LORD said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.” But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God.* (Genesis 6:5-9)

### NANCY’S PRAISE:

God of mercy,

Living in the world today, I see the same sins that have been present since Adam and Eve fell for Satan’s lies. I can say along with King Solomon that *“there is nothing new under the sun”* (Ecclesiastes 1:9). The jealousy and hatred that led Cain to kill his brother Abel are present in my heart also. I resent my friend’s new house because it is bigger and better than mine. I am envious of others’ musical abilities because they make my talents look unimportant. I have not murdered, but I hated a friend when we disagreed about vacation and travel plans. Sin has passed from parent to child through all generations—from Adam and Eve . . . to the time of Noah . . . and into my world today.

I cannot fathom how sad and angry you must have felt when you looked down from heaven on a world that had gone from your perfect creation to a place where evil ran wild. In your perfect wisdom and justice, you decided to send a flood to destroy the world that had lost its love for you. In my sin, I should fear your anger and punishment. But just as you loved and saved Noah from the flood, so you have loved and rescued me. You have saved me from sin, Satan, and death. Not because of anything I have done, but because you are righteous and full of mercy.

Thanks to you, my heart is at peace—even when it rains!

——— *My Praise* ———

## Day 3

**REJOICE:** *Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice, and let them say among the nations, "The LORD reigns!"* (1 Chronicles 16:31)

**READ:** Genesis 7:1–9:29

**REFLECT:** *"Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth."* (Genesis 9:9-13)

### NANCY'S PRAISE:

Immortal God,

I promise my doctor that I will exercise. I promise my mother that I will call every Sunday. I promise my Bible study group I will pray for them. I promise you I will not gossip and will only speak well of my friends. Promises, promises . . . so often I forget what I have said moments after the words have left my mouth. You pronounced judgment on a sinful world, and floodwaters destroyed it just as you had said. You promised to keep Noah and his family safe, and they floated under your protection in the ark. They trusted you, and you were true to your word. You kept your promise.

A rainbow in the sky reminds me of your promises. When thunder rolls and lightning brightens the sky, I can feel safe and secure knowing that you protect and keep me from harm. When temptations cross my path, you are at my side, faithful to your promise to be with me and make me strong against Satan's power. In your perfect timing, you grant me all I need just as you promised. When I grow impatient and question your wisdom in life's struggles, your love never fails or abandons me. You have prepared an eternal home for me with accommodations more luxurious than an ark. Heaven awaits me; in your perfect time I will join you there—not on dry land but in a heavenly kingdom where I will see the fulfillment of your greatest promise: life eternal with my Savior.

— My Praise —

## Day 4

**REJOICE:** *"I will proclaim the name of the LORD; ascribe greatness to our God!"*  
(Deuteronomy 32:3)

**READ:** Genesis 10:1–11:26; 1 Chronicles 1:5-27

**REFLECT:** *These are the clans of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, in their nations, and from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood.*  
(Genesis 10:32)

*Its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. And from there the LORD dispersed them over the face of all the earth.* (Genesis 11:9)

### NANCY'S PRAISE:

Ever-present Spirit,

My grandmother lived to be 90 years old. She taught me about life before television, indoor plumbing, and computers. I listened to her tell the stories of good times and hard times and how God remained faithful along the way.

Noah experienced an unbelievable disaster when he was six hundred years old and then lived another 350 years. He told his grandchildren and several generations afterward how God kept his family safe from the floodwaters. Noah's sons lived long to tell their story of life on the ark. There were no history books, Internet searches, or Bibles. Parents told their children of God's saving grace. Eyewitnesses told the details of an adventure that seemed hard to believe. Witnesses passed on the story from generation to generation, including all the amazing facts.

I have an important story to tell. I have been saved by God's grace and given new life in Christ. I have been washed clean in the water of Baptism. I am God's child living in his grace. My children and grandchildren need to hear the important details, but I cannot forget that there are millions who need to hear the message of salvation through Christ. They may be building towers to praise themselves or trying to find security and happiness in fame or possessions. I know the joy of salvation and need to share it with the world around me. Help me, Holy Spirit, to eagerly share the news of salvation with others who are crying out for answers.

————— *My Praise* —————



## Day 5

**REJOICE:** *"The LORD lives, and blessed be my rock, and exalted be my God, the rock of my salvation."* (2 Samuel 22:47)

**READ:** Job 1:1–3:26

**REFLECT:** *Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.* (Job 1:20-22)

### NANCY'S PRAISE:

Sovereign Lord,

I like to think that material things are not important to me. I don't drive a brand-new car, and I rarely wear the latest fashions. But I am not so sure I could lose everything and respond as Job did: *"The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."* Two 19-year-olds were recently killed in a car accident. I cannot fathom the parents' pain. Losing a child must be unbearable, but to lose ten children all at once? A neighbor watched as his house and all his possessions went up in flames. Job's livestock and livelihood were suddenly gone. Would curses come from my lips or would I bravely go on? Do you really expect me to praise your name in any circumstance? Eventually Job's own health was affected, but in the middle of multiple losses he remained faithful. He did not curse the bountiful God who had given him everything and then allowed it all to be taken away.

Just as Job held on to your promises, so I can praise you if I lose my job and its benefits or the stock market crashes and my retirement account dwindles. Help me remember that you have a plan for me and that you are in control. Satan may look to have the upper hand, but my life is in your hands. Help me praise your name no matter what the circumstances.

——— *My Praise* ———

## Day 6

**REJOICE:** *"Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting!" Then all the people said, "Amen!" and praised the LORD. (1 Chronicles 16:36)*

**READ:** Job 4:1–7:21

**REFLECT:** *Then Job answered and said: "Oh that my vexation were weighed, and all my calamity laid in the balances! For then it would be heavier than the sand of the sea; therefore my words have been rash. For the arrows of the Almighty are in me; my spirit drinks their poison; the terrors of God are arrayed against me. . . . Oh that I might have my request, and that God would fulfill my hope, that it would please God to crush me, that he would let loose his hand and cut me off! This would be my comfort; I would even exult in pain unsparing, for I have not denied the words of the Holy One." (Job 6:1-10)*

### NANCY'S PRAISE:

All-knowing God,

How often I have thought to myself, "Well, she deserved it. She got what she had coming." Do I find joy when others suffer the consequences of their behavior? How easy it is to find fault in others without examining my own thoughts and motives.

Job's friends thought he must have done something pretty bad to be punished so severely by God. They thought, "Come on, Job, admit what you have done." But Job stood firm on his innocence and was certain of his righteousness.

I have fallen along with all the rest of the world. We deserve nothing but what our sins have earned: death and separation from God. Romans 6:23 states, *"The wages of sin is death."* However, the last half of the passage is my joy and Job's confidence: *"But the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* I may try to stand on my own merits, but all my good is no better than filthy rags. You, loving God, have provided the legs I have to stand on . . . the righteousness won through Jesus my Savior. I am righteous in your eyes, but not because I am a Bible study leader or church musician or faithful employee. No, all I have to stand on is the perfection given me through your Son. Thanks to God who gives me the victory in Jesus. Thanks to God that I don't get what I deserve! Praise to you, the immortal, invisible God!

— My Praise —

## Day 7

**REJOICE:** *"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."* (Job 1:21)

**READ:** Job 8:1–10:22

**REFLECT:** *"I will say to God, Do not condemn me, let me know why you contend against me. Does it seem good to you to oppress, to despise the work of your hands and favor the designs of the wicked? . . . Your hands fashioned and made me, and now you have destroyed me altogether. Remember that you have made me like clay, and will you return me to the dust? Did you not pour me out like milk and curdle me like cheese? You clothed me with skin and flesh, and knit me together with bones and sinews. You have granted me life and steadfast love, and your care has preserved my spirit."* (Job 10:2-12)

### NANCY'S PRAISE:

Patient, wise Father,

Why? Three-year-olds ask that question all the time to try to understand the world around them. I often ask the same question. Why, God? Why is there suffering? Why do I feel this way? Why do you allow evil to happen? I fear that my questioning does not have the innocence or curiosity of a three-year-old. My questions, rather, reveal how I doubt your ability to understand and control my life and situation.

The answer to a three-year-old's question is often "because," without much explanation. Your answer may be "because," but with a purpose: "Because I want you to trust me . . . because I know what is good for you . . . because I have a greater purpose in mind." Lord, comfort my soul and help me to trust when I don't know the answer and wonder why. You know the answer and that is all I need. With the Lord of heaven and earth in control, I will not doubt your care and love. You have the answers for my life. You have provided the direction and purpose. You, Lord, are my reason to be. Help me trust in your unfailing love and amazing wisdom. Because you love and care for me, I know that even though I do not understand, your answer "because" is good enough for me.

— My Praise —

## Day 8

**REJOICE:** *I will give to the LORD the thanks due to his righteousness, and I will sing praise to the name of the LORD, the Most High. (Psalm 7:17)*

**READ:** Job 11:1–14:22

**REFLECT:** *“With God are wisdom and might, he has counsel and understanding. If he tears down, none can rebuild; if he shuts a man in, none can open. If he withholds the waters, they dry up; if he sends them out, they overwhelm the land. With him are strength and sound wisdom; the deceived and the deceiver are his.” (Job 12:13-16)*

### NANCY’S PRAISE:

Kind and patient Lord,

Singing songs of praise is easy when everything is going well. I find it easy to praise your name when my work environment is positive, relationships with friends are nurturing, and blessings too numerous to list have been showered upon me. But when storm clouds roll in and my life feels dry and weary, mournful songs and troubled tunes roll off my lips in a litany of self-pity and discontent.

With guidance from the Spirit, I have found my soul is uplifted when I turn to hymns of praise. As Job suffered, his lips formed words of praise. He recounted your strength and compassion. He recalled your majesty and glory. Words of praise have an amazing way of lifting eyes off of self and focusing them where they should be—on you. My spirit, along with my eyes, is drawn to your majesty. My sinking soul rises when you lift me from the depths of despair. You are faithful. You are good. You are mightier than any other being. You alone can pull me from the depths of self-pity and self-focus and lead my soul to worship your glorious name.

In the midst of anguish and misery, Job could sing praises to your name. In spite of external circumstances and spiritual distress, teach me to focus on you and exalt your name, my loving Lord and Savior.

——— *My Praise* ———

## Day 9

**REJOICE:** *Be exalted, O LORD, in your strength! We will sing and praise your power.*  
(Psalm 21:13)

**READ:** Job 15:1–18:21

**REFLECT:** *"I have heard many such things, miserable comforters are you all. Shall windy words have an end? Or what provokes you that you answer? I also could speak as you do, if you were in my place; I could join words together against you and shake my head at you. I could strengthen you with my mouth, and the solace of my lips would assuage your pain." (Job 16:2-5)*

### NANCY'S PRAISE:

My friend Jesus,

While I travel through life on earth, you bless me with friends who encourage and uplift me. I am thankful for my friends—women who stand next to me, build me up, and offer words of encouragement. Job had three friends who visited him while he was enduring great suffering. Job's friends questioned his integrity and blamed him for his circumstances.

I ask forgiveness for times I have used Job's friends as role models in my interactions with my own friends. Forgive me for using words that crush people and wound their spirits. You have called me to be an encourager and to serve you by loving and serving others. Often I have used a sarcastic word that has cut to my friend's heart. I have neglected to give a well-deserved compliment and instead found something to criticize. I have lost opportunities to build people up through positive comments and thoughtful words. I have used words to tear down rather than to build up. I focus on what is wrong rather than what is right. Job called his friends "miserable comforters." Accusations and questions were thrown at Job by his so-called friends. Words of mercy and love were lacking when Job cried out for answers.

Lord, help me to be an encourager. Help me to support and build up . . . to strengthen and love . . . to be Jesus to the people around me. Forgive me for times I have failed. I trust in your mercy and forgiveness that are mine through the blood of your Son.

— My Praise —

## Day 10

**REJOICE:** *Shout for joy in the LORD, O you righteous! Praise befits the upright.* (Psalm 33:1)

**READ:** Job 19:1–21:34

**REFLECT:** *“Oh that my words were written! Oh that they were inscribed in a book! Oh that with an iron pen and lead they were engraved in the rock forever! For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!”* (Job 19:23-27)

### NANCY’S PRAISE:

Risen Lord and Savior,

How I love to worship on Easter. Just as the women rose early and rushed to the empty tomb, so I hurry to church to hear the Easter message. Joy fills my heart as I am reminded of your victory over sin and death. Job praised you as his living Lord long before the first Easter morning. He knew you as his resurrected Redeemer just as I do. I eagerly anticipate the joyous day when I will rise from the dead and see you face-to-face. No dread or fear! Eternal life with you awaits me. My sin-ravaged body will be perfect. Heaven is mine! My heart yearns within me.

But sadly my Easter joy often fades as the weeks pass. Life’s problems and stresses often cloud my thoughts and rob me of that joy. Job’s praise was heard in the midst of horrendous pain and suffering. He praised you as his Lord while sores covered his body and he grieved the loss of his children. Help me remember my Easter joy every day. Whatever my days may bring, you are by my side. When I face tragedy, loss, or death, Easter joy can fill my heart. I can sing of your love on Monday mornings as the week begins or on Friday evenings as the sun sets. Easter joy is mine now. Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives: I know that my Redeemer lives!

——— *My Praise* ———