

Friday - March 15

"Do not be afraid, you who are highly esteemed," he said. "Peace! Be strong now; be strong." When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, "Speak, my Lord, since you have given me strength."

Daniel 10:19

The summer of 2007 was great, except for the months of July and August. I woke up one morning with a low-grade fever and I noticed that there seemed to be a little pain in my diaphragm area when I breathed. So little pain, in fact, that I really didn't know if it was my imagination or not. By mid-morning I knew it wasn't my imagination, so I called a friend of mine who was a physician's assistant to get my diagnosis over the phone. Pain got a little worse, then pain got a lot worse and when my husband came home from work we headed to the emergency room. By the time I was seen in the ER, my pain had turned into spasms in the muscles of my diaphragm - pain that ranks right up there with child birth. Now, I am a singer, so one of the places I DON'T want pain is in my diaphragm. I'm not going to bore you with the rest of the details except to tell you that, after a second trip to the ER, I spent some time in the hospital and vomiting was involved. Vomiting produced stomach acids that burned my vocal chords. If you are a singer, the other place you DON'T want problems is in the vocal chords. Using the vocal chords to speak is one thing; using them to sing is something all together different.

I was diagnosed with a fever of unknown origin and probable viral infection, specific infection unknown. After four days in the hospital, I was released and went home. A few days later, I put in some CD's and decided to hum along. Nothing. I tried again the next day and nothing. After several days, I was able to utter a sound that wasn't pretty. I don't mind telling you, I became a little frightened. Lots of things ran through my head with the main one being, "If singing is my primary form of worship and praise, and if I am no longer able sing, how will I worship?" And then later, "How much do you trust Me?" (It still gives me chills to remember this) It was calming. "How much do I trust Him?" I knew then that God would either return my voice or teach me a new way to worship. I trusted Him, either way.

Slowly, ever so slowly, the diaphragm regained full strength and the chords healed. Only through His grace was my ability to sing restored and was eventually even better than before. And I received a bonus that day: My worship became more complete.

Carol

Prayer: Father, thank you for your never-failing grace that leads us into complete praise and worship of your Son and our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Amen.