

still waters

home church studies

Psalms 20

[Worship]

1 The LORD answer you in the day of trouble!
The name of the God of Jacob protect you!
2 May he send you help from the sanctuary, and give
you support from Zion. 3 May he remember all
your offerings, and regard with favor your burnt
sacrifices. Selah

4 May he grant you your heart's desire, and fulfill
all your plans. 5 May we shout for joy over your
victory, and in the name of our God set up our
banners. May the LORD fulfill all your petitions.
6 Now I know that the LORD will help his
anointed; he will answer him from his holy heaven
with mighty victories by his right hand. 7 Some
take pride in chariots, and some in horses, but our
pride is in the name of the LORD our God. 8
They will collapse and fall, but we shall rise and
stand upright. 9 Give victory to the king, O
LORD; answer us when we call.

Consider:

[Words]

May 13, 2006, marked 25 years since Mehmet Ali Agca, a Turkish assassin, lifted up his gun in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican and shot Pope John Paul II. In December 1983, the pope traveled to Agca's prison cell and forgave him. Some may have said of the pope, echoing what was asked about those Pentecost Christians, "What is he, drunk?"

I believe Pope John Paul's audacious act of forgiveness indicated he *was* a bit intoxicated by the Holy Spirit. His deed planted a seed of the kingdom in my life, leaving me at first weepy and soon recommitted to being a more forgiving person. Perhaps that act of forgiveness planted millions of seeds of God's kingdom in the hearts of

people who remember it around the world. Some of those seeds, I believe, have become "the greatest of all shrubs" where birds (peace doves?) land in the branches.

Pope John Paul II moved beyond concern for his own body and his own wounds or scars. We might recall Paul's affirmation that people of faith "would rather be away from the body and at home

with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:8). Paul gets beyond seeing others merely from "a human point of view" (5:16), even as the Lord picks David for Samuel to anoint by looking at his heart and not his outward appearance (1 Samuel 16:7).

Grant us the ability, O God, to walk by faith and not by sight, and to have hope when we can neither see nor understand.

—Robert Roth

[Scripture]

2 Corinthians 5.6-11

6 So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord — 7 for we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9 So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. 10 For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil. 11 Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others; but we ourselves are well known to God, and I hope that we are also well known to your consciences.

