



Psalm 57:1-3 “Have mercy on me, my God, have mercy on me, for in you I take refuge. I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed. I cry out to God Most High, to God, who vindicates me. He sends from heaven and saves me, rebuking those who hotly pursue me - God sends forth his love and his faithfulness.”

The day was like any other day and we were living our new normal. We continued to wait and Rod’s health continued to worsen. But the night was like no other. It would become a memory etched into my heart and mind. What happened that night started a chain of events that God would use to change our lives forever.

A call to 911 resulted in an ambulance ride to the ER for Rod followed by admittance to the hospital and transfer to ICU. His days were numbered. The veins in his esophagus near his stomach became swollen because blood flow to his liver was reduced. Esophageal varices can leak blood and eventually rupture. He was suffering from severe bleeding which could lead to life-threatening complications, including death.

Can I remember the pit we were in and the desperation? Yes, I can. But I can also remember the prayers of friends crying out for Rod. I can remember how God protected our daughter from the trauma because she was spending the night with a friend. I remember how my sister-in-law selflessly came to the hospital to be with us so I wouldn’t be alone. I remember our parents’ steady support and love. I remember hearing how our brothers and sisters in Christ joined hands and prayed desperately in multiple churches. I remember the fishermen who came to sit by Rod’s side in ICU. I remember his cousin who held his hand so tenderly with tears in his eyes. I remember my employer who rarely showed emotion being so gracious to me with my time needed out of work. These things I remember because God’s whispered grace was in them all.

God hid us under the shadow of His wings until our disaster had passed and He used the people around us to be vessels of His refuge, love, and faithfulness. As I think back to those days and remember God’s loving care, how can I not be his “vessel” to someone else?

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