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Sent: Wed, January 27, 2010 7:42:25 AM

Subject: Prayer Update--January 27, 2010

This God—his way is perfect; the word of the LORD proves true; he is a shield for all those who take refuge in him. For who is God, but the Lord? And who is a rock, except our God? Psalm 18:30-31 (ESV)

Americans are a people with a plan and plans for how to work that plan. It's part of that pioneering spirit that made America great and what keeps America as a leader in the 21st century. There is certainly nothing wrong with that *except* when we forget that our plan is not always God's plan. When that happens we can become frustrated, angry, or bitter at God when He disrupts *our* plan. But the Psalmist reminds us in these verses that *God's* way is perfect and when we plan our ways in light of God's perfect way we find the He is a shield in which we take refuge from the storms of life.

This month we've been reminded of these very truths. We hadn't *planned* on Steve's mom suffering a stroke and spending a week in the hospital and then another week in a rehabilitation center. We hadn't *planned* on spending time away from La Poza in January. But those events did happen. We did *plan* on continuing the Bible studies we've been involved with for the past several months. We did *plan* on starting the New Year strong by focusing on new relationships and building on existing friendships. But those events didn't happen. Yet through it all, we are reminded that our God—"This God—his way is perfect;" We have been reminded that "This God" is our shield and we can take refuge in Him *because* his way is perfect.

Thank you for your prayers for my Mom, Lorraine Henry. She did spend nearly a week in the hospital as the result of a stroke that caused a bleed in the left side of her brain. At this time the doctors believe the stroke was caused by high blood pressure. Because the bleed caused a clot to form the doctor still cannot rule out that a tumor could be the cause of the stroke. He says the body should absorb this clot in 4 to 6 weeks. At that time he will be able to determine with certainty whether there is a tumor. He has done an MRI and says he is "75% sure" there is no tumor but it is possible that the existing clot could obscure a small tumor.

While there is no paralysis, the stroke has affected the part of the brain that produces speech. She knows what she wants to say but she has difficulty getting the words to come out the mouth. The doctor feels that once her body absorbs the clot that her ability to speak will greatly improve. But while the clot remains it continues to put pressure on the part of the brain that controls speech. In the meantime, he encourages her to be patient and continue speech therapy. As mentioned above she spent a week in a rehabilitation center receiving speech therapy as well as physical and occupational therapy. She was released last Friday but continues speech therapy as an outpatient.

We're thankful for the progress that she's made in the 2½ weeks since the stroke but we appreciate your continued prayers for her during this recuperation period. As you can imagine, it is quite frustrating for her when she knows exactly what she wants to say but simply can't find the words to express her thoughts. Pray too that the body will absorb the clot so the surgeon can see definitively that there is no tumor. If the body does not eventually absorb the clot he would have to remove it through a surgical procedure. Mom is a believer. We would ask you to pray that she too will apply the truths of the verses mentioned earlier and *know* that God's way is always perfect.

Finally, we would ask you to pray for our continued ministry in La Poza. Since our parents winter in South Texas, we're thankful they are only a 2 hour drive from La Poza. But this family need has meant that we have been out of La Poza for a period of time. Many of the folks there know why we have been absent. Because of the strong commitment to family and parents in the Mexican culture they fully understand our need to be with our family at this time. The reality is that if we were in La Poza and neglecting family responsibilities, it would very likely reflect negatively on our Christian testimony with many of the people there. But with the progress that Mom continues to make, we do hope to be back very soon to continue Bible studies and other aspects of the ministry.

What a blessing knowing that we serve a sovereign God who is not surprised by any of the events in our lives. His way *is* perfect and his word *always* proves true.

Finding Refuge in Him,

Steve & Robin